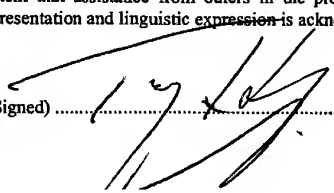


### **CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY**

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge it contains no materials previously published or written by another person, nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at UNSW or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by others, with whom I have worked at UNSW or elsewhere, is explicitly acknowledged in the thesis.

I also declare that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work, except to the extent that assistance from others in the project's design and conception or in style, presentation and linguistic expression is acknowledged.

(Signed) .....

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be '17/10/11', is written over the dotted line of the signature field.

**A History of Sydney Hakoah Soccer Football Club:  
A case study of sport and identity in Sydney's Jewish community 1923-1987**

**by**

**Anthony Thomas Hughes**

**A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
School of History  
University of New South Wales  
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## Abstract

This thesis is an investigation of the role of the Sydney Hakoah Club in sport in the Sydney Jewish community. Previous studies of Sydney Jewry have failed to emphasise the importance of sport in the life of the community. This thesis questions the view that sport has been of peripheral interest to the community.

The thesis focuses on the introduction of the notion of muscular Judaism to world Jewry at the end of the nineteenth century and its impact in Europe. It traces the development of the Jewish sports movement in the face of rising anti-Semitism. It considers the philosophy of the Hakoah Vienna Sports Club and its interaction with Zionism.

The thesis also discusses the increasing use of sport by the Sydney Jewish community in the 1920s, particularly in the fight against intermarriage.

It analyses the role of Sydney Hakoah in Jewish sport and in the Jewish community in general from its formation in 1939. In doing so it also necessarily discusses the role of Hakoah in developments in New South Wales Soccer over time, particularly the club's role in the formation of the New South Wales Soccer Federation and the National Soccer League. It considers the roles of certain individuals in this process.

The thesis finds that sport has been of far greater importance to the Sydney Jewish community than previously imagined. This is true of the 1920s and 1930s. It also finds that sport, and particularly soccer was of immense importance to Sydney Jewry in the post-World War II period. However, the thesis finds that despite the Hakoah Club developing into one of Sydney Jewry's most important institutions the community's interest in supporting a professional soccer club diminished to the point that it became unviable to field a team. The thesis confirms that Sydney Hakoah has left an important social, sporting and cultural legacy to the Sydney Jewish community.



## Acknowledgments

I have received a great deal of assistance in completing this thesis. My thesis supervisor Richard Cashman first introduced me to sports history in the 1980s. Since he accepted me as a doctoral student Richard has guided me with patience and insight, sharing his vast knowledge of the sub-discipline and the process of writing history. He has taught me patience, the importance of attention to detail and the joy of creating through writing. Richard also introduced me to a worldwide network of scholars and to the Australian Society for Sports History (ASSH). This network has been invaluable in advising, discussing, suggesting and encouraging this work.

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I am also indebted to the staff of the various institutions in which I conducted research. In Sydney they were the Mitchell Library, the State Library of New South Wales, the UNSW Library — in particular Mohamed Kazim was a great help. Mary Dacy at the Archive Judaica at the University of Sydney provided valuable assistance. The archivist of the Australian Jewish

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The journey of this thesis has not been an easy one. It has been filled with many unforeseen interruptions, including serious illness to myself and my father Tom who subsequently passed away. I also want to mention here the genius of Dr Charles Teo of UNSW and the Prince of Wales Hospital whose brilliant innovations in neurosurgery saved my life.

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Mary finished rearing her family in a foreign land, disconnected from family networks and life long friends, and it wasn't always an easy task. The experiences of my family, including my sisters Christine and Jacqueline led to my interest in immigration issues. It is a theme I expect to return to many times in the future.

## Abbreviations

AAUA	Amateur Athletic Union of Australasia
AJAC (also known as AJAX)	Associated Judean Athletic Clubs
APIA	<i>Associazione Polisportiva Italo-Australiana.</i>
ASA	Australian Soccer Association
ASF	Australian Soccer Federation
BBB	Bad Blue Boys
BEJAX	British Empire Jewish Australian Ex-servicemen
BJTC	Bankstown Judean Tennis Club
CSC	Croatian Soccer Club
IAAF	International Amateur Athletic Association
IOC	International Olympic Committee
JAAA	Jewish Amateur Athletic Association
JAAC	Jewish Amateur Athletic Club
JASA	Jewish Australian Sports Association
JASA NSW	Jewish Amateur Sports Association of New South Wales
JLV	Judean League of Victoria
JNF	Jewish National Fund
JRL	Jewish Rugby League
JSC	Judean Sports Council
JSL	Judean Soccer League
JSSC	Judean Social and Sports Club
JYPA	Jewish Young People's Association
MJSC	Maccabean Junior Soccer Club
MSAC	Maccabean Social Athletic Club
MSC	Maccabean Soccer Club
MSSC	Maccabean Social and Sports club
MSU	Maccabean Sports Union
MWSU	Maccabean World Sports Union
NSL	National Soccer league
NSWAAA	New South Wales Amateur Athletic Association
NSWM	New South Wales Maccabi
NSWRL	New South Wales Rugby League
NSWSA	New South Wales Soccer Association
NSWSF	New South Wales Soccer Federation
NSWSFA	New South Wales Soccer Football Association
PFA	Palestine Football Association
POC	Palestine Olympic Committee
PSL	Philips Soccer league

RCSC	Randwick Coogee Social Club
SA	Soccer Australia
SCG	Sydney Cricket Ground
SJAAA	Sydney Jewish Amateur Athletic Association
SJCA	Sydney Judean Cricket Association
SJSA	Sydney Judean Soccer Association
SJSC	Sydney Judean Soccer Club
SJSL	Sydney Judean Soccer League
SUAC	Sydney University Athletic Club
VAC	<i>Budapest Vivo es Athletikai Club</i>
WASFA	Western Australian Soccer Football Association
WAZAC	Western Australian Zionist Athletic Club
WMU	World Maccabi Union
YMHA	Young Men's Hebrew Association
YPHA	Young Peoples Hebrew Association

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## Chapter One

### Introduction

The Hakoah Club is located in Hall Street Bondi Beach in Sydney. The name is emblazoned in three metre high letters on the side of the building. It is the largest and most striking structure in this small street that runs west, away from Australia's most famous beach. Many of the thousands of tourists who pass by each year must wonder what this unusual word means and what this place represents. Entering the club, the curious first-time visitor will be impressed by the well-appointed decor and surprised by the vigilant security. Features of the entrance foyer include a striking bronze statue depicting a diving soccer goalkeeper.<sup>1</sup> There are some obvious Jewish symbols on display, the six pointed Magen David (Star of David) and the Menorah (seven branched candelabrum). The visitor will quickly realise that Hakoah is a Jewish club that has something to do with sport, soccer in particular.

The contemporary Hakoah Club is regarded by many as a pillar of the Sydney Jewish community, '... a noble beacon for the Jewish people to meet together in the glow of a friendly compatible atmosphere of camaraderie and pleasure'.<sup>2</sup> The visitor might wonder what is the role of the Hakoah Club in the Jewish community. How did it achieve this pre-eminent position? How and why did a Jewish club come to be located on prime real estate, near Australia's most famous beach? These are some of the issues considered in this thesis. The Sydney Hakoah Club deserves to be studied for a multitude of reasons. It was a sports club founded for ideological reasons, with its roots in early twentieth century Europe. It played a significant role in the story of pre-World War II Jewish refugees and post-World War II Jewish immigrants to Australia. It played a key role in re-defining the Sydney Jewish community in the post-World War II era. Through its involvement in Australian soccer it had a profound impact on Australian sporting culture. However, it is more

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<sup>1</sup> Soccer and football will be used interchangeably throughout the thesis. Where 'football' or 'soccer' are used I refer to Association football. In Australia, soccer tends to be the term most used by the general community and the media while the soccer community uses 'football' or 'soccer' equally. Some in the soccer community criticise the widespread use of 'soccer' in the general community and media believing the code is the 'real football'. This is probably due to the feeling held by many soccer people that the non-use of 'football' when referring to the code is part of the marginalisation of the game by media favourable to other codes. Rugby league, and rugby union will be referred to by these names only. I will use the term Australian Rules for Australian Rules football.

<sup>2</sup> S Einfeld, *Hakoah Club Sydney 1938-1994*, p. 6.

than a mere sports club. Sydney Hakoah owes its existence to a movement that embraced sport as a tool of nationalism and a symbol of Jewish identity. Sport became an inextricable part of the maelstrom of Jewish politics throughout the twentieth century and in this context Hakoah was and is a child of Zionism.

Hakoah is a Hebrew word meaning 'force' or 'strength'.<sup>3</sup> The first sporting club to use this word as a name was founded in Vienna in 1909, where it played a significant role in the battle against anti-Semitism, until it was dissolved by the Nazis in 1938. With the club destroyed, and Jews under attack in the city, many of its members and supporters fled from Vienna. Some former members of Hakoah Vienna, fortunate enough to escape Europe, established sporting clubs in a number of countries, including Australia, using the name Hakoah.

From the mid-1930s, sporting clubs and organisations throughout the Jewish diaspora played an important role in assisting Jewish refugees and immigrants settle into their new homes. In Australia, one such club, the Sydney Hakoah Club, played a significant role in this process and in shaping Jewish community identity in the post-World War II era.

### **Thesis topic**

This thesis explores the role of a sporting club in a particular immigrant community over time. It examines the changing role of Hakoah in the Sydney Jewish community between 1939 and 1987. Sydney Hakoah was named after the Viennese Jewish sporting club Hakoah Vienna. When the club was formed in 1939, it was not only because of nostalgia for the memory of Hakoah Vienna, rather its founders used the name to draw on a great European Jewish sporting tradition. Although not all members of the Sydney Hakoah Club in its early years were Viennese, or even Austrian for that matter, there were enough Hakoahns<sup>4</sup> involved to provide an authentic link with Vienna. Club membership provided both a conduit for the ideals of the Viennese club in exile, and a means of staying in contact with friends, colleagues and family members dispersed around the world. The headquarters of Hakoah were re-located to Tel Aviv after Austria was annexed by Germany in 1938. It encouraged its dispersed members to form clubs in their host countries, to remain

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<sup>3</sup> J Bunzl, *Hoppauf Hakoah*, Vienna, 1987.

<sup>4</sup> Hakoahn or Hakoahner is the term members of Hakoah Vienna used to describe themselves.

in communication through its publication *Hakoah in Exile (or Hakoah in Emigration)*, and to continue to support the Zionist cause through sport.

In order to understand Sydney Hakoah and its role and meanings in the Australian context, the thesis will examine the role of Hakoah in Vienna and the influence of the philosophy of muscular Judaism on the Jewish world from the late nineteenth century. Any history of sport and the Jews in the twentieth century must begin by examining the impact of this philosophy, the idea (*Muskel Judentum*) coined by the Zionist thinker Max Nordau in 1896.<sup>5</sup> In Europe, sport came to be viewed by many Zionist organisations and Jewish communities as an essential element in re-shaping Jewish identity in the face of anti-Semitic prejudice which included racial and ethnic stereotyping. The founding of Hakoah Vienna was a direct result of Nordau's idea of the muscular Jew.

In early twentieth century Europe sport was considered important by assimilationist Jews and a means of fitting into society. Because Jews were often excluded from sporting organisations, many formed their own clubs. The Zionist movement promoted the philosophy of muscular Judaism, recognising that organised sport was a useful tool in preparing Jews (particularly young men) for the perceived struggle for the Jewish homeland that lay ahead. Sport was considered essential to restore pride of race, to instil confidence in the Jewish people and even to represent the Jewish body. The Jewish refugees who came to Australia in the late 1930s brought such ideas with them as part of their cultural baggage.

## Historiography

There exist some studies of sport and ethnicity in Australia, though these concentrate mainly on soccer. In some cases this has been merely as an adjunct or an aside to broader studies of immigrant communities.<sup>6</sup> The majority of academic studies of Australian soccer concentrate mainly on issues of ethnicity and violence. This has occurred because scholars have addressed what has often been considered a negative aspect of the game of soccer in Australia since the late 1950s — the

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<sup>5</sup> From this point on I will use the English style muscular Judaism except in direct quotations where *Muskel Judentum* or *Muskeljudentum* is used.

<sup>6</sup> Three early examples are: A Cohen (ed.), *Urban Ethnicity*, London, 1974, pp. ix-xxiv; J Martin, *Community and Identity: Refugee Groups in Adelaide*, ANU Press, Canberra, 1972; R Unikowski, *Community Endeavours; Migrant Organisations in Melbourne*, ANU Press, Canberra, 1978.

preponderance of ethnically-based clubs in the various state leagues since the late 1950s and especially in the National Soccer League (NSL) since 1977.<sup>7</sup> Since Graham Harrison's 1979 essay on ethnic soccer clubs in Australia, there have been a number of attempts, mainly in journal articles, to address this issue.<sup>8</sup> Writing two years after the establishment of the NSL, Harrison argued that the debate over the ethnic naming of Australian soccer clubs was politically motivated and driven by administrators who were more concerned with the game's 'external image'. They created an environment in which the perceived ethnic involvement was considered detrimental. His analysis concluded that there was no clear-cut distinction between ethnic names and non-ethnic names and that the ethnic attribution can be viewed on a continuum; provocatively ethnic, identifiably ethnic and ethnic by association. Harrison's study is useful in that it highlights the fact that the ethnic connotation of a soccer club's name is a matter of individual perception and tells little about who supports, plays for, or administers a club.

Philip Mosely's comprehensive *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer: A History 1959-1990*,<sup>9</sup> is the most thorough study of the many complex issues raised by this phenomenon. Concentrating mainly on developments in soccer in New South Wales and Victoria, Mosely set out to unravel the complexities of the relationship between sport, immigration and ethnicity. His study establishes that the debate on ethnic involvement in Australian soccer has been a long running one, beginning in earnest in the mid-1950s when some ethnically-based clubs began to climb up the ladder in various state soccer leagues around Australia. The debate has focused on the issues of ethnic naming of soccer clubs, ethnic related violence at soccer matches and the search for some magic formula for Australian soccer to 'make it in the big time' — to advance soccer in the pecking order of Australian sporting culture. This has led to proposals to somehow neutralise the effect of the sport's ethnic ties and render the game acceptable to the perceived 'mainstream' Anglo-Australian sports enthusiast. Mosely believed this thinking was driven by marketers steeped in the traditions of the Anglo-Australian corporate and sporting world, with little knowledge or understanding of Australian soccer and its traditions, ethnic or otherwise.

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<sup>7</sup> Formed as the Phillips Soccer League (PSL) in 1977. In its formative years it was described as the PSL, later becoming the National Soccer League (NSL). To avoid any confusion I will refer to the league as the NSL throughout the thesis.

<sup>8</sup> G Harrison 'What's in an Ethnic name?: Soccer Clubs in Australia', *Canberra Anthropology*, vol. 2, no. 2, October 1979, pp. 23-35.

The search for the magic formula to advance soccer reached its nadir with the submission of the *Bradley Report* to the Australian Soccer Federation (ASF) in May 1990.<sup>10</sup> One of Bradley's main recommendations was the abolition of 'ethnic' names of Australian soccer clubs. This idea was not new, as it was raised as early as 1960. It was a contentious issue in the negotiations leading to the formation of the NSL in 1977, and a policy dear to the heart of the president of the ASF, Arthur George. Bradley recommended that clubs should be ordered to make all ground announcements in English, the waving of national flags and banners at matches should be banned; appropriate non-ethnic nicknames should be adopted and ethnic and nationalistic references from club crests and logos should be removed.

Attempts by the ASF to abolish ethnic names and 'ethnic baggage' from the NSL (now Soccer Australia [SA]) were paid lip-service only by the ethnic NSL clubs. Bradley's report echoed an earlier attempt in the 1980s to achieve 'Australianisation' of soccer. At one point the ASF accepted the compromise of Sydney Croatia and Melbourne Croatia Clubs playing as Sydney and Melbourne 'CSC' (Croatian Soccer Club) rather than 'Croatia'. Forcing the clubs to change their names had little effect on the terraces, and the nicknames supplied by marketers, such as Marconi Stallions or Sydney City Slickers, had no meaning to the fans. The strategy did not lead to improved patronage of soccer by the wider community. National and other flags and banners representing particular nationalities and ethnicities remained widely visible at games, while the supporters of South Melbourne and Adelaide City continued to chant 'Hellas! Hellas!' or 'Juve! Juve!' respectively.

Mosely argued that sport was a central instrument in the process of ethnicity and was used by both immigrants and Anglo-Australians in defining their relationships to each other. He added that ethnic involvement in Australian soccer was a fluid rather than static issue. Drawing on a wide range of sources he demonstrated the utility of soccer in post-World War II ethnic communities and the reactions of both the soccer community and society at large to this development. Soccer was viewed

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<sup>9</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer: A History 1959-1990*, ASC, Canberra 1996.

<sup>10</sup> G Bradley, *Management Report of Australian Soccer*, ASF, Sydney, 1990.

as a prism through which changes occurring in immigrant ethnic groups, and reactions to these groups in the host society, could be observed.

Mosely examined soccer clubs from various Balkan communities in Australia in *Ethnicity and Soccer in Australia*. He considered the importance of the politics of Balkan nationalisms and their links to the persistence of violence at games involving these clubs.<sup>11</sup> He argued that it is the clubs from these communities that have been least likely to 'de-ethnicise'.<sup>12</sup> Comparing clubs from Balkan communities with clubs from other ethnic communities, Mosely demonstrated that ethnic persistence varied greatly from community to community. While multiculturalism replaced assimilation as Australian Government policy in the 1970s and 1980s, Mosely's report demonstrated that some ethnic persistence continued in the sporting sphere. Soccer played a major role, often unwittingly, in the emergence of this new way of looking at Australia's changing society since World War II.

Wray Vamplew argued in *Ethnicity and Soccer in Australia* that the violence that sometimes occurred at soccer matches in Australia between members of ethnic groups was the downside of multiculturalism. Violence was due to the aggressive nationalism that some immigrants brought as part of their cultural baggage.<sup>13</sup> Vamplew argued that three major themes of Australian history—immigration, sport and violence—are linked in Australian soccer. While recognising the contribution of immigrants to the sport, Vamplew supported de-ethnicising the game and the promotion of district-based clubs as a means of eradicating violence. He admitted this process could be fraught with danger and could possibly lead to the erosion of public support for soccer.

By contrast, Roy Hay argued persuasively in the same volume that ethnically-based soccer clubs contributed positively to soccer and to Australian society.<sup>14</sup>

Hay contended that ethnic clubs provided integrative services such as

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<sup>11</sup> In Sydney these clubs were Croatia, Yugal (Pan-Yugoslav ethos but mostly Serbian), Avala and White Eagles (Serbian),

<sup>12</sup> J O'Hara, (ed.), *Ethnicity and Soccer in Australia*, ASSH Studies no. 10, Sydney 1994. see P Mosely, 'Balkan Politics in Australian Soccer', pp. 33-44.

<sup>13</sup> W Vamplew, 'Violence in Australian Soccer: The Ethnic Contribution', in J O'Hara (ed.), *Ethnicity and Soccer in Australia*, pp. 1-16.

<sup>14</sup> R Hay, 'British Football, Wogball or the World Game?: Towards a Social History of Victorian Soccer', J O'Hara (ed.), *Ethnicity and Soccer in Australia*, pp. 44-78.

accommodation, job finding networks and a venue where immigrants could adapt to life in Australia among the familiar sights and sounds of their kinspeople. He believed that immigrants made a positive contribution to Australia society, and that much of the violence attributed to ethnic involvement in soccer was exaggerated and was a result of media stereotyping. Hay's perspective provided a useful paradigm for this thesis.

In his dissertation, John Hughson described the results of an ethnographic study on the supporters of Sydney United Soccer Club, formerly Sydney Croatia, and the role of the club in the Sydney Croatian community.<sup>15</sup> A central part of Hughson's analysis was the activities of 'The Bad Blue Boys' (BBB), a group of youths supporting the team. The Sydney Croatia Soccer Club shared many of the characteristics of the early Sydney Hakoah, in that it was a catalyst for community coalescence and an avowed and active supporter of the nationalist/separatist position in the homeland. The BBB group provided Hughson with a focus on a well-organised ethnically-based soccer supporters club, whose political philosophy has been translated from southern Europe.

The most comprehensive study of sport and immigration in Australia is *Sporting Immigrants*.<sup>16</sup> This book advanced that the ethnic contribution to Australian sport has not been properly recognised. Individual chapters cover sport and the Croatian, Greek, Italian, Irish, Jewish,<sup>17</sup> Pacific Islander, Polish and Vietnamese communities. There are also chapters on ethnicity in various sports such as soccer, cricket, Australian Rules football, rugby league, surf life saving, netball, boxing, martial arts, softball and weightlifting. There is also a chapter on women, ethnicity and sport.

Murray Phillips has also made a contribution to the debate on ethnicity and sport in his essay on ethnicity and class at the Brisbane Golf Club.<sup>18</sup> Phillips examined the contribution of Scots to the establishment of golf in Brisbane. He

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<sup>15</sup> J E Hughson, 'A Feel for the Game: An Ethnographic Study of Soccer Support and Identity', unpub. PhD thesis, University of New South Wales, 1996.

<sup>16</sup> P Mosely, R Cashman, J O'Hara and H Weatherburn (eds.), *Sporting Immigrants: Sport and Ethnicity in Australia*, Walla Walla Press, Sydney 1997.

<sup>17</sup> The Jewish chapter, written by myself, provides an overview of the involvement of Jews in sport in Australia.

<sup>18</sup> M Phillips, 'Ethnicity and Class at the Brisbane Golf Club', *Sporting Traditions*, vol. 4, no. 2, May 1988, pp. 201-214.

analysed the class of the club's founders, concluding that while Scots were significant in the introduction of golf to Australia, the club excluded the working class. This study highlighted the importance of examining the cultural baggage of the immigrant, which included sport and leisure preferences.

### **Sport and Australian Jewish history**

In general histories of Australian Jewry, sport receives little attention. In their extensive two-volume work on the history of Australian Jewry, W D and H L Rubenstein provide only a brief resume of several Australian Jewish sporting stars and clubs. The broad nature of their study and their focus does not allow for an in-depth study of the important role of sport in the community over time. Hakoah barely rates a mention. This is an oversight considering the importance many Jews attribute to Hakoah. Arthur Baar suggested that Hakoah was:

an unusual sports club, becoming the symbol and pride around the whole world, and at the same time, the motor of the Jewish national movement, of the Jewish renaissance. The Hakoah was exemplary and inspiring: it became the pride of Jewish Youth everywhere.<sup>19</sup>

William Rubenstein demonstrated an indifference to Hakoah. He described Hakoah as 'a second division club in the NSW Soccer Federation [sic] — that was founded in 1939 — for many years'. He goes on to describe Hakoah as the 'first major ethnic club in Australian soccer'.<sup>20</sup> The latter statement is untrue, and the former demonstrates a lack of understanding of the soccer scene in post-World War II Sydney. It fails to recognise Hakoah's true status in soccer and in the Sydney Jewish community. Hakoah slowly emerged as one of Australian soccer's leading clubs from the mid-1950s. When the NSL was formed in 1977, Hakoah became champion in four out of the ten seasons it competed, was runner-up on three occasions and grand final winners on two other occasions when it failed to win the championship.<sup>21</sup> The club was outstanding when playing in the New South Wales State League first division between 1957 and 1977. Hakoah never played in the second division during

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<sup>19</sup> A Baar, *Jaher Hakoah Vienna 1909-1970*, Tel Aviv, 1970, p. 6.

<sup>20</sup> W D and H L Rubenstein, *The Jews in Australia: A Thematic History*, William Heinemann, Melbourne, 1991, p. 277.



this time, and regularly won trophies. The club's achievements off the field have been of immense importance to the Sydney Jewish community.

In *Edge of the Diaspora: Two Centuries of Jewish Settlement in Australia*, Suzanne Rutland devoted only three pages to sport. Hakoah and the Australian Maccabi Federation are mentioned on two pages. Rutland acknowledges that sporting organisations were helpful in the fight against intermarriage and assimilation. She suggests why there was an upsurge in interest and participation in Jewish sport in Sydney in the 1920s:<sup>22</sup>

The limitations of the synagogue were realised by communal leaders who believed that the establishment of communal centres and the fostering of sporting and social activities for young people would provide a rallying point for the unaffiliated and so help reduce the rising intermarriage rates.<sup>23</sup>

### **International studies of Jews, ethnicity and sport**

Jewish involvement in sport has been widely studied in Europe, Israel and the United States of America. Harold Ribalow published *The Jew in American Sports* in 1948.<sup>24</sup> It was subsequently revised and reissued in 1954, 1955, 1959 and 1966 demonstrating the enormous interest in the topic in the United States. Ribalow outlined the careers and contribution of 24 men to sport in America and there are also short essays on 'The importance of being sports minded', 'The national game' and 'On various sports'. Ribalow aimed to acknowledge the contribution of Jews to American sports and of American Jews who were 'aware of the fact that they were adding something glamorous to American Jewish History'.<sup>25</sup> While Ribalow's book is aimed at a popular audience it does convey an understanding of the struggle of Jewish athletes to make it at the highest level because of their Jewishness.

The ground-breaking academic work on Jewish sport was George Eisen's 1979 doctoral dissertation, 'The Maccabiah Games: A History of the Jewish Olympics', in which the author

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<sup>21</sup> Official Program, *Coca Cola Soccer League Top Five 1992*, p. 19.

<sup>22</sup> S Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora: Two Centuries of Jewish Settlement in Australia*, Southwood Press, Sydney, 1988.

<sup>23</sup> S Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, p. 154.

<sup>24</sup> H U Ribalow, *The Jew in American Sports*, Bloch Publishing Company, New York, 1966, p. xvi.

<sup>25</sup> H U Ribalow, *The Jew in American Sports*, p. xvi.

discussed the economic, social and political importance of the festival. Eisen stated that 'the Games transcend the confines of sport, offering a sentimental and emotional link between Israel and the diaspora, and fostering a growing national awareness'.<sup>26</sup> This thesis was the first academic work to analyse the emergence of the Jewish gymnastic and sport movement, and remains a valuable analysis for scholars of sports history and Jewish history alike. The chapter on the early period of organised Jewish sport 1880-1914 informs this thesis.

Peter Levine's authoritative *Ellis Island to Ebbets Field: Sport and the American Jewish Experience*, recognised the importance of sport in community development and in the integration of Jewish immigrants in America. He wrote:

Potentially able to alter the meaning of quintessential American events into ethnic experiences, participation in sport both confirmed a meaningful Jewish identity while promoting assimilation and American acceptance. Rich and complex, full of conflict and reconciliation, encompassing questions of economic goals, class, family and community, this story of the Jewish experience in American sport demands rejection of any simple model or any one theory of assimilation. It does not depict the destruction of some idealised European Jewish or first-generation immigrant past in exchange for inclusion into an homogenised American world. Rather, it recounts both the flowering of a new American Jewish present out of the crucible of cultures that assimilation was all about and its legacy for American Jewry.<sup>27</sup>

This is a valuable work exploring the complex role of sport in Jewish America, particularly in relation to the subject of stereotyping. Levine described the stereotype of the Jew as bookish and weak, more fond of the intellectual and the fiscal than the pleasures and rigours of the sports field or gymnasium. He reveals the role of Jewish sportsmen and women in shattering this myth in America. This thesis will demonstrate that this experience was paralleled in Australia although on a smaller scale. Australia did not admit the vast numbers of Jews that America did (two million between 1881 and

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<sup>26</sup> G Eisen, 'The Maccabiah Games: A History of the Jewish Olympics', unpub. PhD thesis, University of Maryland, 1979.

<sup>27</sup> P Levine, *Ellis Island to Ebbets Field: Sport in the American Jewish Experience*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1992.

1924)<sup>28</sup> but nevertheless the value of sport to the immigrant was just as vital in Australia as it was in America.

### **Justification of thesis topic**

This thesis explores an area of Australian social and sports history previously ignored by scholars. While there have been some attempts to examine the role of sport in ethnic communities in Australia, these have been mostly broad based studies. With the exception of John Hughson's ethnographic study of the Croatian soccer club, Sydney United, there has been no attempt to analyse individual clubs over time.

While studies of the Australian Jewish community, Jewish refugees and Jewish immigration often mention sport in passing, there has been no study of its social function in the community over time. Sport has played an important and understated role in the history of Australian Jewry, especially since the 1920s. Sydney Hakoah has been of immense importance to refugees, migrants and Sydney Jewry in general. This study will enhance the understanding of the Sydney Jewish community and the impact of refugees and post-World War II immigrants.

### **Ethnicity**

Ethnicity has attracted much wider scholarly debate. W W Isajiw has stated that many authors, including anthropologists, sociologists, social scientists, and historians explicitly avoid defining the term ethnicity. This is 'because there is always the danger that any definition may be either too narrow and therefore inapplicable to the ethnic group under study, or else too general and hence devoid of substantive meaning'.<sup>29</sup> Some scholars apply a series of markers to groups of people in attempts to define them as 'ethnic', including race, religion, language, common ancestry and a sense of peoplehood. The application of one, or more, of these markers immediately leads to a qualification, which may lead to a simplification of the definition.

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<sup>28</sup> P Levine, *Ellis Island to Ebbets Field: Sport in the American Jewish Experience*, p. 5

<sup>29</sup> W W Isajiw, 'Definitions of Ethnicity', *Ethnicity*, 1, 1974, p. 111.

A useful example of this phenomenon is provided by the use of religion to define the essential traits of a Jewish ethnicity. Even a cursory examination of a Jewish community will reveal a variety of religious practices and philosophies — from the fundamentalist to orthodox to the very liberal — of people from many diverse nations and regions with different cultural and linguistic traditions. The Australian Jewish community is a good example of this. Isajiw has suggested a general working definition of ethnicity which is appropriate for this thesis: 'an involuntary group of people who share the same culture or descendants of such people who identify themselves and/or are identified by others as belonging to the same involuntary group'.<sup>30</sup>

The approach to ethnicity in this thesis will emphasise that contacts between immigrants and their host society led to an evolving relationship which is not easily explained by concepts such as assimilation, acculturation or integration. A pluralist approach is more desirable: the process of the forming of distinct ethnic groups is understood as a two-way process in which the immigrants react to the host society and vice versa.

Interaction between ethnic group members and the host society at various sites, such as the workplace, social and sporting clubs and places of religion, creates a multicultural dialogue. However, such contact may lead to misunderstandings and antagonisms which can reinforce the divide between the host and the newcomers. It can also result in racial, religious or ethnic intolerance in the host society.

Sport, particularly soccer, has contributed to the sense of identity of some ethnic groups in Australia. Sydney Hakoah, a migrant-based club, performed an important role in redefining Jewish identity in the post-World War II period. Hakoah was also at the cutting edge of migrant and ethnic relations, both in terms of inter-ethnic group relations in Sydney, and in terms of relations between Australians in general and the Jewish community. Many of Sydney Hakoah's administrators, who were at the forefront of developments in New South Wales and Australian soccer from the mid-1950s, became important Jewish community leaders

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<sup>30</sup> W W Isajiw, 'Definitions of Ethnicity', p. 111.

## Community

Community means different things to different people. Richard Dennis and Stephen Daniels have stated that the concept of community performs many different functions in the description and analysis of society. They have suggested that:

There have been as many definitions of community as there have been writers interested in the subject, and so little consensus that some writers have suggested that we abandon the concept entirely. Historically the concept of community has evolved with both a descriptive meaning, indicating a particular social group living in a certain area, and an evaluative meaning, indicating a positive neighbourly quality of social relationships.<sup>31</sup>

In post-World War II Sydney, with its large immigrant population, new arrivals were ascribed to one community or another in the popular imagination and the media, whether or not they saw themselves as belonging to a particular group. These people suffered many forms of discrimination. Nevertheless, they were admitted to Australia and tolerated to varying degrees. The Australian Government argued that migrants were needed to ensure the country's economic future and security. Elaine Thompson stated that 'non-Anglo white immigration was tolerated because it was believed that such immigrants could be assimilated and that the democratic base of a culturally homogenous society could be maintained'.<sup>32</sup> In reality it did not work out like this. Richard White has described how the notion of an 'Australian way of life', which was held up as the goal of immigrants, became the basis of government policy. He stated that:

assimilation ... assumed a common, homogenous Australian way of life which would be threatened unless outsiders conformed to it ... the concept was used to discriminate against migrants in Australia. Since it was never really defined, and often was simply a formula for expressing a general prejudice against outsiders

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<sup>31</sup> R Dennis and S Daniels, "Community" and the Social Geography of Victorian Cities', in M Drake, *Time, Family and Community: Perspectives on Family and Community History*, Open University & Blackwell, Oxford, 1994, p. 202.

<sup>32</sup> E Thompson, *Fair Enough: Egalitarianism in Australia*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 1994, p. 252.

and a distaste for non-conformity, all migrants could be criticised for failing to adopt the 'Australian way of life'.<sup>33</sup>

Discrimination, feelings of alienation combined with a lack of proficiency in the English language led to the 'ghettoisation' of some immigrants. Thus it was common to hear about the 'Greek community', the 'Italian community' or the 'Jewish community'. This was the case whether or not the individuals lived in close proximity, saw themselves as belonging to such a group or participated in same-group activities. Soccer clubs became at once a refuge from discrimination, an expression of group identity and solidarity and evidence to some Australians that immigrants were different, which some saw as 'an affront to society'.<sup>34</sup>

John Hughson, drawing on the work of Ronald Wild developed a useful working definition of community. Wild developed four basic concepts of community. Community as a geographic locale, a social system, a sense of identity or belonging and an ideology.<sup>35</sup> Hughson concluded that despite:

... the subtle nuances of academic definitions of the term community, it remains a real category for many immigrants who see themselves as part of one or another ethnic group. Therefore for all its limitations, an immigrant community is a convenient category for social analyses.<sup>36</sup>

In his study of sport and identities in the South Sydney area, Charles Little noted that no single definition can adequately address all the complexities of the concept of community.<sup>37</sup> There is no single definition that adequately fits the experience of Australian Jewry and Hakoah's role in it since 1939.

It is clear that in any society, any nominated group is not a homogenous entity. There are class, gender, political, religious and economic differences. One might

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<sup>33</sup> R White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688-1980*, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1981. p. 160.

<sup>34</sup> R White, *Inventing Australia*, p. 160.

<sup>35</sup> R Wild, *Australian Community Studies and Beyond*, Allan & Unwin, Sydney, 1981, p. 14.

<sup>36</sup> R Cashman and J Hughson, 'Communities: Case Studies' in P Mosely, R Cashman, J O'Hara and H Weatherburn (eds.), *Sporting Immigrants: Sport and Ethnicity in Australia*, p. 46.

think of the Australian Irish 'community' as an example. Many Australians (and Irish) would accept the notion of such a community. Closer examination, however, would reveal that the group so defined contains many sub-groups and some of these groups are clearly antagonistic to one another.<sup>38</sup> Many Orangemen in Australia would not see themselves as part of an 'imagined' Irish community. Nor would second or third generation Australians of Irish descent see themselves as part of this community in the same way as recently-settled Irish immigrants. Some recently-settled Irish treat the notion that Australians of distant Irish extraction are 'Irish' with disdain. Such differences exist in all communities.

While it is convenient to use the category of Jewish community in Australia for this thesis, any definition minimises the role of subgroups within the whole. Modern Jewish consciousness has been shaped by the events of World War II: displacement, the Holocaust, dispersal as well as the foundation of Israel and its fight for survival. This has resulted in a unity of purpose on many issues since the 1960s, particularly political ones. Internal disputes continue regarding religious rites, or about how best to represent the Jewish community's interests to government or to the Australian public via the media,<sup>39</sup> but 'the community is one of the best organised in the Jewish diaspora ... strongly united on a limited number of goals on which there is consensus or near consensus ...'.<sup>40</sup>

Communities are not static but are dynamic organisms. Lucy Taksa made the point well:

The term (community) tends to be used in a way that suggests totality. It is often assumed that people have only one communal identification — which assumes that humans are one dimensional. It is imperative to recognise that most people belong simultaneously to a variety of communities. They can belong, say to, a geographical community while at the same time belonging to a religious community, another based on their ethnicity, political orientation, gender or sporting interests. In regard to some of these they may have little

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<sup>37</sup> C Little, 'Sport, Communities and Identities: A Case Study of Race, Gender and Ethnicity in South Sydney Sport', unpub. PhD thesis, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 2000, p. 10.

<sup>38</sup> P O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 1986, pp. 5-21.

<sup>39</sup> J Jones, 'Defending Jewish Interests', *The Guide to Jewish Life in Australia, New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific*, AJN, Sydney 1993, pp. 8-11.

<sup>40</sup> W D Rubenstein, *Judaism in Australia*, AGPS, Canberra, 1995, p. 7.

choice in the first instance, either because of birth, family affiliation, or even the economics involved in the choice of residence. Yet we must recognise that people make continuous choices about their communal identifications well as the degree of their affiliation.<sup>41</sup>

## Jewish community and sport

This thesis will examine the role of sport in the Sydney Jewish community and the contribution of Jews to sport, in particular soccer. Studies of sport in Australian Jewish communities are few. However, three important works have been published. Brian Kino's *The Carnivals: A History of Jewish Amateur Sporting Contests in Australia 1924 to 1974*<sup>42</sup> is a popular record and commentary on the history of Jewish interstate sporting carnivals in Australia (later Australian Maccabi Games), but is not an academic analysis of the role of sport in the Jewish community. Kino's work is a collection of facts, photographs and interesting press clippings assembled by an enthusiast. It is a valuable source of information on the history of the Maccabi movement in Australia. Barry Markoff's history of the AJAX Australian Rules Football Club describes the role of that club in the Melbourne Jewish community.<sup>43</sup> These two works assume that a recognisable Jewish community exists and sport performs a valuable function in it. Colin Tatz has published the first academic study of a Jewish sporting club in Australia, *A Course of History: The History of the Monash Country Club*.<sup>44</sup> In this book, Tatz explains why golf-loving Jews in Sydney found it necessary to establish their own club in 1931. Despite the 'non-distinctive' stance of Australian Jewry, Jews in Sydney found themselves excluded from membership of the most prestigious Sydney golf clubs. He describes 'a group of bold Jewish golfers who refused to concur with their

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<sup>41</sup> L Taksa, 'Definitions and Disjunctions', in P O'Farrell and L McCarthy (eds.), *Community in Australia*, Community History Program, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 1994, p. 25.

<sup>42</sup> B Kino's *The Carnivals: A History of Jewish Amateur Sporting Contests in Australia 1924 to 1974*, York Press, Melbourne 1974.

<sup>43</sup> B Markoff, *The Road to A Grade: A History of the AJAX Football Club*, Brownhill Prints, Melbourne, 1980.

<sup>44</sup> C Tatz, *A Course of History: Monash Country Club 1931-2001*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 2002.



marginalised place or perception in society' and formed their own club.<sup>45</sup> Tatz explains that:

rejection of the golf club variety created feelings of alienation, not belonging, unworthiness, especially for people who have contributed culturally, academically, legally, economically, politically and to sport and military life. Salon and social anti-Semitism has been a facet of life in Australia, but in sports other than golf there was no blatant anti-Jewish feeling.<sup>46</sup>

Tatz's work is important because it illuminates the reality of anti-Semitism in Australian sport. The book describes how a group of Jews responded to this challenge and established an institution that had as part of its charter the acceptance of members no matter what their race or creed. Tatz's work is not just a traditional sports club history. It is a social history of the Sydney Jewish community, a commentary on the nature and extent of anti-Semitism and the place of sport in the community. Stoddart and Tatz had noted some instances of anti-Semitism in their earlier history of the Royal Sydney Golf Club.<sup>47</sup>

### Key questions

The research for this thesis was guided by the following key questions. Why was Hakoah set up in Sydney in 1939? How did the club evolve and why did it become so important to Jewish community? How did Sydney Hakoah contribute to Jewish identity? What does the history of Hakoah reveal about political, class, racial, and religious issues in the community before and after 1939? How was Hakoah perceived within and outside the Jewish community? How and why did Sydney Hakoah become a powerful force in Australian soccer, exerting a major influence on the shape and directions of the post-World War II game and on Australian sporting culture?

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<sup>45</sup> C Tatz, *A Course of History*, p. 265.

<sup>46</sup> C Tatz, *A Course of History*, p. 31.

## Approach and structure

The thesis is an analysis in seven chapters followed by a concluding chapter. After an introductory chapter, Chapter two discusses muscular Judaism, the rise of organised Jewish sport and the history of Hakoah Vienna from its founding in 1909 to its disbanding by the Nazis in 1938. Chapter three discusses the history of sport in the Sydney Jewish community from 1900 to 1939 and establishes that organised Jewish sport in the city flourished from the 1920s.

Chapter four discusses the founding of the Sydney Hakoah Club in 1939 and its activities during World War II. Chapter five discusses the revival of the Sydney Hakoah Club in 1944 after a short period of inactivity. This chapter examines the role of former members of Hakoah Vienna and the influence of Zionist principals and the ideas of muscular Judaism on the club at that time. The chapter discusses the development of the club between 1944 and 1956, its place in the Sydney Jewish community and its emergence as an important power on the Sydney soccer scene.

Chapter six examines the role of Sydney Hakoah in New South Wales soccer from the mid-1950s, especially its key role in the split that occurred in the code in 1957. It discusses its place as one of the migrant-based clubs that began to dominate soccer in Sydney from the late 1950s. The chapter also discusses the relationship between Sydney Hakoah and the Jewish community, and the leadership role of particular individuals. It also outlines how Sydney Hakoah fielded a professional soccer team, which had fewer Jewish players on its roster over time. Chapter seven discusses Sydney Hakoah from 1961 to 1986. It documents the rise of the club to a position of strength in the New South Wales Soccer Federation (NSWSF) and the changes that took place in the league over time. The chapter continues the discussion of the ambivalent relationship between the Sydney Hakoah and the Jewish community. It details the founding of the Hakoah social club and the emergence of the social club as the hub of Jewish communal activity in Sydney's eastern suburbs. It also discusses Sydney Hakoah's dominance of the NSL and the prominent role that members of Hakoah's executive played in Australian soccer. The chapter ends with the disbandment of the club's soccer team and the reasons for this. The final chapter will sum up the thesis conclusions and make suggestions for further study.

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<sup>47</sup> B Stoddart and C Tatz, *The Royal Sydney Golf Club: The First Hundred Years*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1993.

The thesis will discuss the evolution of Sydney Hakoah from a minor amateur soccer club, through its period of success at the highest level in Australia, to its cessation as a professional soccer club. It will also consider the legacy of Sydney Hakoah Soccer Football to the Jewish community.

## Sources

Research for the European component of the thesis was undertaken in Vienna and London in July of 1995. Interviews were conducted with pre and post-World War II members of Hakoah Vienna. Some archives and ephemera of Hakoah Vienna were inspected at the *Jüdische Museum Wien*. The research trip to Vienna coincided with an exhibition dedicated to the history of Hakoah and its meanings in the Viennese community. The Jewish Library of Vienna, made available materials relevant to the Hakoah and the philosophy of muscular Judaism. Some primary and secondary materials unavailable in Australia were secured and translated from German.

Some interviews were conducted in London. The British Jewish Press was consulted at the British Library Newspaper Library at Collindale in London. The Jewish Museum in London was also consulted.

In Sydney one problem (or advantage) was that no research had been attempted in this field. However, a substantial body of information was uncovered. In particular *Hakoah Star*, the club journal first published in 1979, provided a wealth of information. So too the annual reports of the Hakoah Eastern Suburbs SFC from 1970. Sydney Hakoah Club administrators, made available other club documents and helped arrange interviews. The records of the Kadimah Progress Sporting Club were made available by its founder George Keen.

The *Archive Judaica* at the University of Sydney was a valuable source of information on Jewish sport in Sydney in the 1920s and 1930s. It houses a treasury of information on Australian Zionism and every other aspect of the Australian Jewish community. The archive of the Jewish Historical Society located at the Great Synagogue in Elizabeth Sydney, and later at Mandelbaum House in Darlington, provided valuable primary and secondary sources on all aspects of the history of the Jewish people in Sydney. The society's archives contains valuable archives on sport

and sporting ephemera. Of particular interest is its small holding of defunct and rare magazines such as *The Maccabean*. The sporting content of this magazine was quite extensive and it is one of many Jewish sources that give lie to the myth within the Sydney Jewish community that interest in sport is a relatively new phenomenon. The archives also contain archives of Jewish youth organisations and the Zionist movement in Australia.

Fortunately there has been a long tradition of Jewish newspapers in Australia and these have been maintained at the Mitchell Library and at the offices of *the Sydney Jewish News*. These newspapers included sporting content from 1923 and were valuable in forming a picture of the development of Jewish sport in Sydney (and Australia) and uncovering the role of many important individuals involved in Jewish sport in Sydney over time.

The E S Marks and J C Davis Sporting Collections held in the Mitchell Library are one of the most valuable primary sporting archives in Australia. They contain numerous documents pertinent to the history of soccer and other sports in New South Wales that were valuable to the study. The newspaper collection of the State Library of New South Wales was also very valuable. Apart from the Australian dailies and magazines such as the *Bulletin*, the *Referee* was an invaluable source for this thesis.

Secondary materials on immigration, ethnicity, Jewish history, Australian history, modern European history and the history of sport were consulted. The works of John Bunzl, George Eisen, Peter Levine, Phillip Mosely and Colin Tatz provided valuable insights and perspectives on the history of Jewish sport, as did the work of Philip Mosley on New South Wales soccer.

Statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), New South Wales Soccer Federation (NSWSF), Soccer Australia (SA), Hakoah Vienna, Sydney Hakoah and the Australian Maccabi Union (AMU) were collected. I also examined some private collections of documents such as those of Harry Cohen, George Keen, Hans Klimt and Peter Nash. Former Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) commentators Mike Hill and John Kosmina provided files of NSL statistics.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> John Kosmina is a former Hakoah player interviewed about his career at the club. Kosmina's career took him from Polonia in Adelaide to Arsenal in the English First division. He returned to

The office of New South Wales Maccabi (NSWM) provided information and made available literature on contemporary sporting issues within the community. Likewise, the office of *The Jewish News* made their library and collection of newspapers available and the sporting editor Peter Scott provided guidance.

### Oral history

The origins of the Sydney Hakoah Club stretch back beyond its foundation in 1939 to Habsburg Vienna. Some of the early protagonists in this history were still alive when this research began, and while there is a dearth of secondary material directly relevant to this study, the views of those who were intimately involved partly made up for this. The pitfalls of oral history are well known. However, in this study I was guided by Professor Patrick O'Farrell's approach to the use of oral history sources. O'Farrell stated:

Like the published script of a play, at its best published oral history is merely the bare bones of the original reality, without the actors, scenery, audience, production and possibilities of varieties of interpretation which make it live of and as, itself. It is as a published score is to the musical performance. What should be the goals of oral history? ... to reach back to capture the last echoes of the old world before it totally disappears ... to talk to the elderly about not their direct experience, but what their parents and grandparents told them of a prior world: an oral method to trap an oral world. And with our recent immigrants, some perhaps direct from oral cultures, an accessible prospect to the right historian, both exciting and valuable. And a true multicultural benefaction.<sup>49</sup>

The most valuable interviews were conducted with the older generation of Jewish sportsmen and sportswomen. These included interviews with Hans Klimt, a Viennese nonagenarian who was a member of Hakoah Vienna after World War I and one of those responsible for Hakoah in Sydney after World War II; Karl Haber

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Australia to play for West Adelaide's championship winning team in 1978 before joining Hakoah late in 1981. In 1986 he joined Sydney Olympic. In 1989 he joined APIA and he finished his playing career with Sutherland in the NSWFS in 1991. Kosmina played 102 internationals for Australia and was captain on 68 occasions. John Kosmina, Interview, 1995.

<sup>49</sup> P O'Farrell, 'The Great Oral History Debate Revisited', *Quadrant*, July 1987, p. 12.

also a pre-World War II member of Hakoah Vienna; Anne Pisker a swimmer for Hakoah Vienna in the 1930s; Myer Rosenblum another nonagenarian who as a young man inhabited the sporting world of Sydney in the 1920s.

Useful also were the testimonies of a younger set of post-World War II immigrants who became leaders of Sydney Hakoah, such as Andrew Sardy, Andrew Lederer and Sam Fiszman. These men of course still had reputations at stake and ongoing agendas in the Jewish community. There was an awareness that their testimony was often guided by political expediency and a desire to have 'their' story of Hakoah told. Some such as George Shipp and Peter Nash were players in the 1940s and 1950s who provided intelligent and interesting perspectives on the club's history.

The testimonies of recent fans (1970s and 1980s) and professional players and managers of Sydney Hakoah provided useful insights into the club from 'the ground up'. While their views informed the thesis, it is important to remember the subjects were recalling recent events that had been mediated by the press and television.

It was also important to recognise the problems inherent in writing a Jewish history of the twentieth century, focusing mostly on the experiences of post-World War II European immigrants to Australia. This inevitably involved many who had suffered at the hands of Nazi Germany. Some of those interviewed were pre-World War II refugees. The Holocaust is an overwhelming, vivid and painful memory for these people. Their interpretation of any history is inevitably shaped and informed by its horror.

## Chapter Two

### Muscular Judaism and Hakoah Vienna 1909-1938

‘Jews are not sportsmen ...’<sup>1</sup>

This chapter will examine the rise of organised Jewish sport in Europe from the late nineteenth century. It considers the philosophy of muscular Judaism, the foundation of Hakoah Vienna Sports Club in 1909 and its place in the history of Jewish Vienna until it was disbanded by the Nazis in 1938. The ideas developed by the club in Vienna during this period and its legacy to Jewish sport will also be examined. Muscular Judaism, the philosophical doctrine underpinning the emergence and development of a distinctly Jewish sports ethos, will be discussed in detail.

The following questions will be considered. When, where and why did Jewish community leaders decide to develop a distinctly Jewish philosophy relating to physical activity? Who formed the original Hakoah and to what extent did muscular Judaism form a part of the club’s ideology? What was the sporting ethos developed in the Hakoah Vienna Club by the late 1930s?

#### Muscular Judaism

Throughout European history the Jews have been branded ‘the killers of Christ’ and have been blamed for many social evils. Pogroms, massacres and expulsions were regular occurrences. Until the nineteenth century these events were essentially religiously based and often sanctioned by the Christian Churches to the extent that anti-Semitic myths and stereotypes had become part of the collective mind.

The emancipation of central European Jews began with a series of decrees issued by the Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II in October 1781, culminating in his *Toleranzpatent* (Edict of Tolerance) of January 1782.<sup>2</sup> It was completed by the time of the Austrian constitution of 1867 (and confirmed by the ‘confessional laws’ of May 1867) which fully integrated Jews into Austrian society.<sup>3</sup> This ‘placed Jews

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Ford quoted in P Levine, *Ellis Island to Ebbetts Field*, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> T C W Blanning, *Joseph II*, Longman, London, 1994, pp. 72-73.

<sup>3</sup> R Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy: From Enlightenment to Eclipse*, St Martin’s Press, New York, 2001, pp. 198-199.

on a formal legal standing equal to Christians except in the appointment to high state office'.<sup>4</sup> Despite the emancipation of the Jews in Germany and Austria-Hungary, and the emergence of liberalism in these countries in the nineteenth century, there was a rise in anti-Semitism. However, many Jews had been encouraged by their new-found freedoms and a new Jewish bourgeois class emerged. Many rejected their religion or let it lapse, preferring assimilation. They believed that by becoming good citizens and minimising the external manifestations of difference, traditional hatred of Jews would diminish and possibly disappear.

In the second half of the nineteenth century there were signs all over Europe that the gains made by Jews in some areas were in jeopardy. Despite the optimism of some, particularly in Jewish Vienna, the future for European Jewry appeared bleak. In particular the rise of pan-German nationalism after 1848 saw a new anti-Semitism emerge. In fact, open discrimination by Germans against Jews began to increase. Austro-German student fraternities began denying Jews membership in 1878.<sup>5</sup> The rationalism of the nineteenth century, the advance of liberalism and the diminishing of the Church's authority did not lead to a decrease in anti-Semitism. Rather, as the century drew to a close there was greater institutionalised anti-Semitism which took economic, social and racial forms as well as 'killers of Christ' clichés that formed the anti-Semitic dogma of the National Socialist Party (Nazis) in Germany and Austria when it emerged in the 1920s. Jews were excluded from many Turner (gymnastic) clubs and suffered ostracism from sporting clubs and intellectual groups in universities. Robin Okey stated that in the late nineteenth century the climate was 'saturated with anti-Semitism' and that it 'in its various forms it pointed up the shadow side of Austro-Hungarian society'.<sup>6</sup>

The Dreyfus affair was one of the most celebrated examples of anti-Semitism in the nineteenth century. Captain Alfred Dreyfus (1859-1935), who worked in the French Ministry for War, was accused of betraying military secrets to the Germans. Dreyfus was initially found guilty and sent to Devil's Island (a penal colony off the Atlantic coast of French Guiana) in 1894. When evidence of his innocence surfaced in 1896 the military tried to suppress it. He was not exonerated until 1906.

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<sup>4</sup> I Oxaal, 'The Jews of Young Hitler's Vienna: Historical and Sociological Aspects', I Oxaal et al (eds.), *Jews, Antisemitism and Culture in Vienna*, Routledge and Keegan Paul, London, 1987, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> R Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, p. 345.

<sup>6</sup> R Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, p. 345.



The affair, with its gross anti-Semitic prejudice, was watched closely by Theodore Herzl (1860-1904), who was working in Paris in the 1890s for his Viennese newspaper *Neue Freie Presse*. Herzl became convinced that the emancipation and normalisation of Jewish existence had done nothing to alleviate the hatred of Jews and noted that persecution based on age-old stereotypes was still widespread. He believed that the solution was the creation of a Jewish homeland, a self-governing Jewish state. Together with some other Jewish leaders and intellectuals, he organised the First Zionist Congress at Basel in Switzerland from 29-31 August 1897. He stated at the congress that 'We are here to lay the foundation stone of the house which is to shelter the Jewish nation'.<sup>7</sup> The Congress resulted in what became known as the Basel Program, and one of its aims was to awaken the Jewish people to the idea of self-help. Max Nordau (1849-1923), a Budapest born writer and physician, was impressed by Herzl's Zionism and had become one of its most zealous advocates by 1898. Nordau summed up the themes of the Basel program: 'the creation for the Jewish people of a publicly recognised, legally secured home in Palestine'.<sup>8</sup>

The Second Zionist Congress, also held at Basel from 28-31 August 1898, was organised under the slogan 'Capture the Communities' and addressed the issue of how to overcome opposition to the Zionist movement from within Jewish communities. One of the most important ideas to come out of this congress was Nordau's *Muskel Judentum*. He believed that the physical vitality of world Jewry was as important to the movement's future success as its nationalist intellectual underpinnings. At this second congress he made a speech in which he advocated an active policy of creating 'Jewish muscle'.<sup>9</sup>

This provocative and emotive term was intended to 'shake up urban Jewry and confront it with evidence of (Jewish) feebleness'.<sup>10</sup> In pursuing the goal of a national homeland, Nordau believed that political Zionism must create a positive Jewish national identity. His strategy consisted of two aims: to challenge the anti-

<sup>7</sup> R Pattai (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Zionism and Israel*, Herzl and Ross, New York, 1971, p. 205.

<sup>8</sup> R Pattai (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Zionism and Israel*, p. 241.

<sup>9</sup> See appendix 1 for a translation of Nordau's 'Muskeljudentum' speech to the second Zionist Congress.

<sup>10</sup> H Bennett, 'Die Jüdische Turn-undo Sportbewegung als Ausdruck der Selbstfindung und Selbstbehauptung des Deutschen Judentums', in A Paucker (ed.), *Di Juden im National-Sozialistischen Deutschland, 1933-1943*, JCB Mohr, Tübingen, 1986, pp. 223.

Semitic stereotype of the Jew as physically weak and to reinvigorate Jewish society by challenging the poor self-image held by many Jews. He believed that in some cases the stereotype had become self-fulfilling. He contended that traditional anti-Semitism had worked to emasculate the Jewish male and that Jewish family values had feminised Jewish men so that Jews lacked the masculine characteristics of Christian society. Nordau's philosophy was based on masculine self-respect.

In an important essay on the subject, John Hoberman argued that 'the fundamental point of Nordau's famous call in 1898 for a muscular Jewry, was not its physical achievement per se but rather the Jew's struggle to achieve a fully-fledged masculine identity in Europe'.<sup>11</sup> Hoberman's essay critiqued the Jewish self-loathing of Viennese philosopher Otto Weininger. In his book *Geschlecht und Charakter* (*Sex and Character*) Weininger theorised that the masculine element was positive, productive and moral while the feminine was negative, unproductive and amoral. He denounced Judaism as feminine and amoral in comparison to Christianity.<sup>12</sup> Anti-Semites later used his theory in their propaganda. Hoberman stated that Weininger in his 'sometimes accurate and sometimes pathological analysis of the Jewish experience of his era, as an attempt to effect his own disappearance as a Jewish male' was 'terrified by the critical Aryan gaze, and tried desperately to achieve that state of invisibility we call total assimilation; or in Anna Freud's famous phrase, "identification with the aggressor"'.<sup>13</sup> Hoberman's analysis provides the intellectual context behind the development of Nordau's philosophy.

Hoberman stated that while rejecting the basis for Jewish stereotypes, Nordau recognised that Jews had been marginalised and persecuted for centuries. In an essentially masculine environment, the existing paradigm of Jewish masculine identity, derived in Hoberman's view from the cultural legacy of the 'ideology of adventure', had to undergo fundamental change to meet the challenges ahead. The idea that the Jew was weak, instinctively antipathetic towards violence and unworthy, had grown up in medieval times and ignored the 'knightly' values displayed by figures in ancient Jewish history such as Judas Maccabeas. Nordau drew on the heroes of Jewish antiquity for his role models recognising that historical precedent

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<sup>11</sup> J Hoberman, 'Otto Weininger and the Critique of Jewish Masculinity', N A Harrowitz and Barbara Hyams (eds.), *Jews and Gender: Responses to Otto Weininger*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1996, p. 144.

<sup>12</sup> O Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter*, Vienna, 1903.

<sup>13</sup> J Hoberman, 'Otto Weininger and the Critique of Jewish Masculinity', p. 153.

could be a powerful weapon in motivating young men to assume a new identity by taking action.

Hoberman's analysis of European Jewish identity by the late nineteenth century helps explain why Nordau saw the development of a muscular Judaism as an urgent and essential policy for the fledgling political movement. Looking at the paradox between the anti-Semitic critique of the Jews developed since medieval times in Europe, and the evidence of male knightly role models available to the Christian world in the *Old Testament* Hoberman concluded that:

This ostensible paradox is easily resolved by recognising that the poisoned image of the Jewish male is a post-medieval construct that assumed its modern form and special virulence only towards the end of the nineteenth century. The military unfitness of the Jew, derived from both physical and characterological defects, was now one element of a highly elaborate racial folklore concerning the purported deficiencies of the Jewish male. By the age of German romanticism, the stereotype of an alleged Jewish cowardice was so deeply anchored in the collective unconscious (of German society) that putting ones life on the line for the Fatherland was the only way to break out of the 'magic Jewish Circle'. By the end of the century caricaturists had recorded every nuance of the Jew's failures to achieve equal status with the gentile male.<sup>14</sup>

Nordau's appeal to Jews to become involved in athletic activity did not occur in a vacuum. Contrary to the aphysical stereotype of the Jew that concerned Nordau, there was a European tradition of Jewish physical activity in Europe. Fred S Worms noted that there were references in Jewish sources to ball games, fencing and horse riding in Spain and Provence in the Middle Ages. The *Schulchan Aruch*, published in the sixteenth century, discussed whether ball games were permitted on the Sabbath.<sup>15</sup> There had been some involvement of Jews in sport in Europe during the nineteenth century. The exclusion of Jewish students from duelling societies in Germany and Austria led to them forming their own societies. In the formative years of the *Deutsche Turnerschaft* (German gymnastic movement) many Jews became members. However, they found themselves excluded in later years.

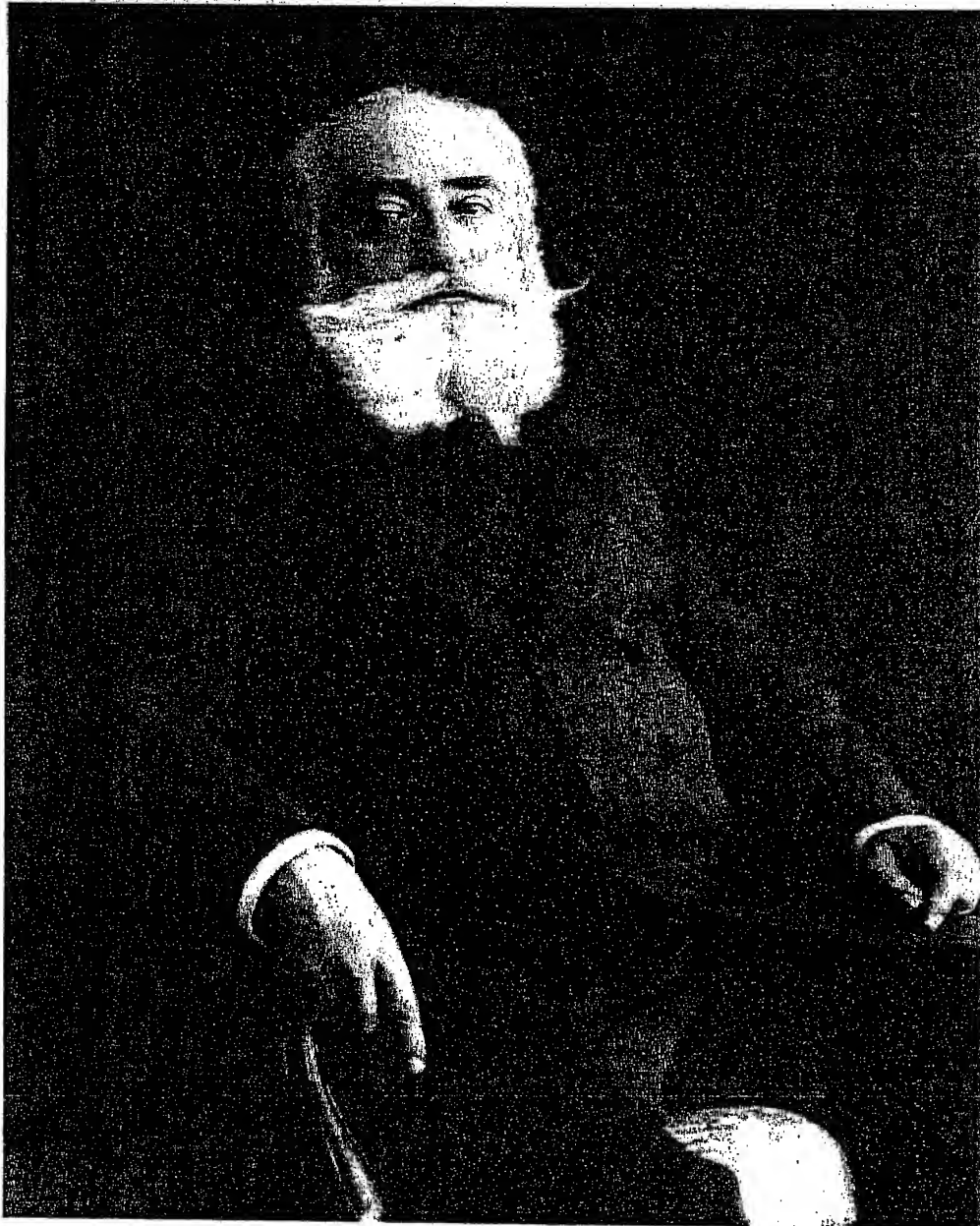
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<sup>14</sup> J Hoberman, 'Otto Weininger and the Critique of Jewish Masculinity', p. 146.

<sup>15</sup> F S Worms, 'Sporting Jews', *The Jewish Quarterly*, Summer 1992, p. 38.

Figure 2.1 Dr Max Nordau, the Zionist thinker responsible for the idea of muscular Judaism.

Max Nordau



Nordau's move to create a positive Jewish identity took place at the time of the industrialisation and urbanisation of central and western Europe leading to the evolution of mass organised sport and the compartmentalising of leisure time. He sensed that the new emphasis on athletic activity, particularly in education, could be turned to the advantage of his movement, that Jews could learn from the socialising methods being employed by nationalistic governments.

It is notable that the First Zionist Congress took place just one year after the first modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896. Two German Jews, Alfred and Gustav Felix Flatow, who were members of a *Turner* club, won medals in gymnastics.<sup>16</sup> George Berkley has also noted that from the early 1890s 'Vienna's Jewish youth had displayed a great interest in sports ... and at the first Olympic Games in 1896 had won a first and a third in swimming'.<sup>17</sup> Like Nordau, Pierre de Coubertin, the president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), believed sport had social utility. He based his philosophy of Olympism partly on ideals of British muscular Christianity, linked to a romantic notion of the ancient Olympic Games, whose history, symbols and mythology he appropriated and modified to enhance his new movement.<sup>18</sup> It is probable that Nordau was also influenced by the successful use of sport for social purposes that occurred in the British education system. De Coubertin and Nordau shared common ground in that they believed that sport could contribute to the vitality of a nation.

While appropriating ideas from the German *Turner* movement and organised sport on the British model, Nordau elevated the second century AD Jewish hero Simeon Bar Kochba.<sup>19</sup>

... who was a hero, who refused to accept any defeat. When victory eluded him he knew it was time to die. Bar Kochba is the last embodiment in world history of battle-hardened Jewry, quick to arms.<sup>20</sup>

For Nordau, Bar Kochba symbolised a Jewish ideal of toughness, physical strength and a capacity to challenge a superior foe. When he promoted *Muskel Judentum* he contended that it had a previous history. He blamed the physical

<sup>16</sup> Alfred Flatow finished first in the parallel bars and second in the horizontal bars. Alfred and Gustav were members of the victorious team in the team parallel bars and horizontal bars events. D Wallechinsky, *The Complete Book of the Olympics*, Penguin Books, New York, 2000, p. 345.

<sup>17</sup> G E Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews: The Tragedy of Success 1880s-1980s*, Bat Books and Madison Books, Cambridge MA, 1988, p. 130. Paul Neumann was first in the 400 meters freestyle and Otto Herschmann third in the 100 meters freestyle, Wallechinsky, *The Complete Book of the Olympics*, pp. 424 and 430.

<sup>18</sup> J J MacAloon, *This Great Symbol: Pierre de Coubertin and the Origins of the Modern Olympic Games*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1981, p. 51.

<sup>19</sup> Simeon Bar Kochba (or Kokhba) was the leader of the Maccabees who initiated the ill-fated revolt against the Romans in 132-134 AD. Bar Kochba had initial success waging guerilla warfare. The Emperor Hadrian summoned Gaius Julius Severus from Britain and he eventually defeated Bar Kochba in a last stand near the Dead Sea. It was this defeat that led to the expulsion of the Jews from Palestine.

<sup>20</sup> M Nordau, 'Muskeljudentum', *Jüdische Turnzeitung*, vol. 1, no. 2, June 1900, p. 10.

degeneration of Jews on their European host societies in the centuries since the scattering of the Jews:

For a long time, too long we have practised the destruction of the body. But I am expressing myself inaccurately. It was others who practised this destruction on us, with tremendous success, as the hundreds of thousands of Jewish corpses in the ghettos, in church squares, on the roads of medieval Europe attest. We should have denied ourselves this virtue more than willingly. We should have looked after our bodies, rather than destroying them, or — metaphorically and literally — allowing them to be destroyed. We know how to make good use of our life and to judge it according to its worth. Perhaps it (the body/health) is a less treasured asset for us than it is for others, but it is still a valuable possession and we are happy to take good care of it. For centuries we were not able to do so. All the elements of Aristotelian physics were stingily allocated to us: light and air, water and soil, in the narrowness of the Jewish streets our poor limbs forgot how to move freely; in the gloom of their sunless houses our eyes became accustomed to nothing more than a shy blink; in the constant fear of persecution, the strength of our voice lapsed into a sacred whisper, which only swelled into a powerful cry when our martyrs on the funeral pyre screamed the prayer for the dead into the faces of their executioners. But now the constraints are broken we are permitted space, at least physically, to live freely. If we keep clinging to our oldest traditions, we will again become strong chested, taut-limbed, farsighted men.<sup>21</sup>

Nordau believed physical rehabilitation was essential to the achievement of the Zionist ideal. He contended that Jews could not rely solely on intellectual and philanthropic skills to succeed in the task ahead. The all-round character of the Jew needed to be improved by physical education. He advocated that the idea of muscular Judaism should be spread throughout the diaspora so that world Jewry could be transformed:

*Turnen* has a more important role to play in education and upbringing for Jews than for other people. It makes us stand up straight, both physically and

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<sup>21</sup> M Nordau, 'Muskeljudentum', p. 11.

morally. It nourishes our self-consciousness. Our enemies maintain that we already have too much of that. But we know best, how false this representation is. We lack completely a calm belief in our own strength.<sup>22</sup>

Michael Ticher maintained that muscular Judaism resulted from specifically Zionist thinking on the utility of participation in sport amongst Jews:

This was the entirely practical desire to prepare young Jews physically for the hard manual labour which they would be required to undertake following immigration to Palestine.<sup>23</sup>

The changing social norms in Germany and Austria may have contributed to the idea of muscular Judaism. Nordau clearly recognised the importance physical education had assumed in the education of Germans and Austrians. Marion Kaplan has noted the importance of maintaining bourgeois respectability amongst Jewish middle class Germans in imperial Germany. Part of this respectability could be achieved by participation in German activities:

In imperial Germany health was equated with patriotism. Germans placed great value on physical upbringing, on the bearing, fortitude, and sports ability of young people. Jews often strove to achieve these standards. They often also desired to appear robust and 'German' in contrast to the pale unhealthy image which anti-Semites foisted upon them.<sup>24</sup>

Nordau appealed to a constituency already sympathetic to the idea of sports as a means of assimilation. However, he refocussed those activities in a Zionist direction. From 1898, many European Jewish youth were inspired by Nordau's philosophy when they formed Zionist youth groups. Ticher has identified two types of Jewish sportsmen in imperial Germany. One group belonged to clubs which had no particular religious leanings and which were open to all to join, but which happened to attract a large number of Jews; the other belonged to clubs which were explicitly connected to the Zionist movement, were political in purpose and exclusively Jewish

<sup>22</sup> M Nordau, 'Muskeljudentum', p. 11.

<sup>23</sup> M Ticher, 'Jews and Football in Berlin 1890-1933: A Case Study of Identity and Continuity in German Sport', unpub. MA Hons thesis, School of German Studies, University of New South Wales, 1994, p. 46.

<sup>24</sup> M Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class: Women, Family and Identity in Imperial Germany*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1991, p. 56.

in membership.<sup>25</sup> This foreshadowed the debate on sports between liberal Jews and Zionists and which would be an issue of rivalry between FC Austria and Hakoah Vienna in the 1920s and 1930s.

Another important element in a discussion of the rise of organised sport in Germany is the *völkisch* ideology. Poppel described this as the system of ideas, and often feelings, that looked to the German *Volk* of the pagan Teutonic tribes as the true basis for German culture and society, rather than to any supposedly foreign notions of modern western civilisations or secular political citizenship, such as were represented by the Enlightenment. The *völkisch* ideology was a nostalgic response to modern society, and in outlook it embraced opposition to modernism in all its forms, attacking industrialisation, liberalism and — since they stood as an easy target for all that was hated in this new order from which they had benefited — the Jews.<sup>26</sup>

Race was the essence of the *volk* and, paradoxically, aspects of the *völkisch* ideology were taken over by the Zionists: 'Thus notions characteristic of *völkisch* ideology, such as the organic, collective, spiritual and even the mystical nature of the *volk*, easily found a place in Zionist utterances'.<sup>27</sup> However, Zionism was a nationalist ideology that embraced the achievements of western civilisation, that ran counter to any notions of Jewish integration into the German *volk*.

Anti-Semitism was actively fostered by those promoting pan-Germanism and pan-Slavism and was linked to the rise of nationalism throughout Europe in varying degrees from country to country.<sup>28</sup> Anti-Semitism became a feature of the politics of student groups at German universities. Adopting the *völkisch* ideology many of these groups began to exclude Jewish students from their fraternities, youth groups and *Turnvereine* (gymnastic clubs). This pattern of exclusion led to Jewish students forming their own fraternities, walking and gymnastic clubs. Nordau's appeal to Jewish youth to reinvigorate itself thus came at a time when the climate was ripe for such a philosophy to take root. Many emancipated Jews in Europe who wished to

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<sup>25</sup> M Ticher, 'Jews and Football in Berlin 1890-1933: A Case Study of Identity and Continuity in German Sport', p. 39.

<sup>26</sup> S M Poppel, *Zionism in Germany 1897-1933: The Shaping of a Jewish Identity*, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1977, p. 127.

<sup>27</sup> S M Poppel, *Zionism in Germany 1897-1933: The Shaping of a Jewish Identity*, p. 127.

<sup>28</sup> G Eisen, *The Maccabiah Games: A History of the Jewish Olympics*, pp. 1-2.



be seen as loyal and acculturated citizens were already participating in sports. Doing exercise had already been accepted as part of 'being Austrian' or 'being German'.

### Emergence of Jewish sports clubs in Europe

The first Jewish sports club was formed in Budapest in 1888.<sup>29</sup> Between 1880 and 1910 the Jewish population of Budapest increased from 5.6 to 7.2 per cent of the total population (about 932 000). Jews had become prominent in professions and political life making up 45.3 per cent of lawyers and 48.5 per cent of physicians; seventeen were members of the upper chamber of the Imperial Diet and 103 became deputies in the lower chamber between 1867 and 1918.<sup>30</sup> This success, rather than gain prestige for the Jewish community, only fuelled anti-Semitic hatred and was the root of anti-Semitic riots at Pressburg in 1882. Undoubtedly an increase in overt anti-Semitism was a prime factor in the formation of Jewish sports clubs. Anti-Semites could not deter Jews from the desire to participate in sporting activity during new found leisure time.

In autumn 1894 the *Israelitische Turnverein* (Israel Gymnastic Club) in Constantinople (now Istanbul) was formed, mainly by expatriate German and Viennese Jews. Eisen believed that this occurred when the *Deutsche Turnerschaft* restricted Jewish admissions. The small German community in Constantinople tended to be ethnocentric, leaning towards extreme nationalism and anti-Semitism. They placed restrictions on the number of Jews who could join the club. Some Jews petitioned the Ottoman Government for permission to form their own club and it was granted. Jewish gymnasts who had been members of the *Deutsche Turnerschaft* soon joined the new Jewish club. Eisen considered that this action was a 'defiance of the local German community rather than a deliberate promotion of Jewish national elements and that little ideological significance should be attributed to it'.<sup>31</sup> A Jewish gymnastic club was formed in Plodiv in Bulgaria in 1897 and was the first to adopt the name Maccabi in 1902. Eisen noted this use of historical names by Jewish clubs to add to their legitimacy.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> G E Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews: The Tragedy of Success 1880s-1900s*, p. 129.

<sup>30</sup> J Reiss, 'Budapest', A Stalzer (ed.), *Jewish Heritage in Central Europe*, Jewish Welcome Service, Vienna, 1995, p. 29.

<sup>31</sup> G Eisen, *The Maccabiah Games: A History of the Jewish Olympics*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>32</sup> G Eisen, *The Maccabiah Games: A History of the Jewish Olympics*, p. 17.

In 1887 the *Erster Wiener Turnverein* (First Viennese Gymnastic Club) introduced an article that excluded Jews.<sup>33</sup> A similar article was later adopted by other clubs. This demonstrated to liberal Viennese Jews that assimilation through sports was no longer viable. As a result Jewish athletes began forming their own clubs — ostensibly such clubs and fraternities were open to Jews and Gentiles but in practice they became exclusively Jewish.<sup>34</sup> In 1899, one year after Nordau's first plea to Zionists to become muscular Jews, the *Erster Wiener Jüdischer Turnverein* (First Viennese Jewish Gymnastic Club) was formed.<sup>35</sup> By 1903 a European roof body, *Die Jüdische Turnerschaft* (Union of Jewish gymnastic Clubs) had been formed to govern Jewish sport in Europe.<sup>36</sup> However, the exclusion of Jews from sporting clubs continued. By 1907 Austrian branches of the *Wandervogel* (youth movement), an outdoor and camping group were also excluding Jews, leading to the establishment of a Jewish counterpart. This became a familiar pattern. Some Jews attempted to take part, assimilate and to disguise overtly Jewish ways. Their exclusion from these clubs forced Jews to form their own clubs, leading to clashes that reinforced ancient stereotypes and hatreds.

In her essay on Jewish nationalism and identity in central Europe, Jehuda Reinharz described Jewish reactions to exclusion from German clubs and fraternities. The process of forming their own clubs led to dissonance. On the one hand, there were some young liberal Jews who favoured assimilation. On the other hand, they were acting in a parochial manner within the context of a closed fraternity.<sup>37</sup> Some saw no problem in this, believing in the need for organised resistance to anti-Semitism, at the same time fighting for liberalism. They believed that this retreat to parochial fraternities and clubs was a necessary temporary phenomenon on the road to full integration.

The second approach suggested by Reinharz (and the one that best fits the Hakoah case) was the rejection of assimilation and acculturation. It was advocated that Jews should recognise that exclusively Jewish clubs and fraternities were not temporary measures but preferable as long-term instruments for fostering Jewish pride and

<sup>33</sup> A Konchar, *A Jewish Sports Club in Vienna, 1909-1995*, Jewish Museum of Vienna, Vienna, 1995, p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> J Reinharz, 'Jewish Nationalism and Jewish Identity in Central Europe', *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book XXXVII*, London, 1992, p. 156.

<sup>35</sup> A Konchar, *A Jewish Sports Club in Vienna, 1909-1995*, p. 3.

<sup>36</sup> F S Worms, 'Sporting Jews', *The Jewish Quarterly*, Summer 1992, p. 39.

<sup>37</sup> J Reinharz, 'Jewish Nationalism and Jewish Identity in Central Europe', p. 157.

unity.<sup>38</sup> In common with some liberal assimilationist groups, they attacked anti-Semitism as antithetical to (German/Austrian) law with liberal principles cultivated among Jews in German/Austrian culture. They also stressed the need for Jewish defence, focusing on how Jewish interests could be defended.<sup>39</sup>

In Germany, Bar Kochba Berlin sports club was formed in 1898, followed shortly after by the *Jüdische Turnverein Bielitz-Biala* in Austria. Between 1899 and 1903, twenty Jewish *Turnverein* were formed: seven in Bulgaria, two in Austria, five in Bohemia and Moravia, one in Galacia and five in Germany.<sup>40</sup> In 1900 the journal of the new movement *Jüdische Turnzeitung* (Jewish Gymnasts newsletter) was launched, appearing monthly until 1921. With the founding of the Maccabi World Union (MWU), this journal was replaced by *Der Makkabi* which appeared regularly until 1938.

*Jüdische Turnzeitung* was influential among Jewish youth and preached the value of sport for Jews and for the Zionist movement. Nordau used it successfully to publicise his idea of the muscular Jew. The cardinal theme of *Jüdische Turnzeitung* was:

the fact of physical degeneration throughout centuries of ghetto existence. This fact was of concern to above all Jewish doctors who martialled statistics to show that the birthrate was dropping and the death rate rising. According to critics in their own camp (that is fellow Jews), this physical decline corresponded to a more general moral weakness. The alarming evidence strengthened the national *Turner* in their goal of making a contribution to the Jewish national Renaissance.<sup>41</sup>

The Bar Kochba Club in Berlin was heavily influenced by the *Turner* movement. However, by the 1920s it was mainly an athletics club though football was also prominent.<sup>42</sup> While the club was formed in response to Nordau's ideals, it relied heavily on existing invented traditions of German mass participation sport. Ticher

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<sup>38</sup> J Reinharz, 'Jewish Nationalism and Jewish Identity in Central Europe', p. 157.

<sup>39</sup> J Reinharz, 'Jewish Nationalism and Jewish Identity in Central Europe', p. 157.

<sup>40</sup> 'Milestones in the History of the Maccabi Movement', [www.total.net:8080/~maccabi/milestone/history.htm](http://www.total.net:8080/~maccabi/milestone/history.htm)

<sup>41</sup> H Bernett, 'Die Jüdische Turn-und Sportbewegung als Ausdruck der Selbstfindung und Selbstbehauptung des Deutschen Judentums', p. 223.

<sup>42</sup> M Ticher, 'Jews and Football in Berlin 1890-1933: A Case Study of Identity and Continuity in German Sport', p. 72.

suggested that opinion at Bar Kochba was divided between those who wanted the club to be associated with the Zionist ideal and those who merely wished to be successful at sport at an elite level in a Jewish environment. Similar tensions would later become characteristic of the Jewish sports scene in Australia. An important antecedent of Hakoah was also formed at this time, the *Budapest Vivo es Athletikai Club* (VAC). It was this club which proved the inspiration and the model for the most significant of all the pre-World War II Jewish sports clubs in Europe — Hakoah Vienna.

While appealing to antiquity to inspire Jewish youth to greater physical activity, Nordau preached to an audience who accepted the desirability of sport. There were a number of factors in Austria that provided the impetus for and shaped the character of exclusively Jewish sports clubs. They included the desire to participate in organised sport because it had become the cultural norm to do so; exclusion from clubs due to anti-Semitism; the growth of Zionism; the response to increasingly virulent anti-Semitism; the emulation of the forms and structures of their Austrian counterparts (but in practice becoming ethnically distinctive) and the currency of the notion of muscular Judaism among Zionists. The adoption of ideas of muscular Judaism and the formation of Jewish clubs and fraternities by Zionists and others, meant that the sports club often quickly became the aggressive physical face of Zionism in Europe. This was particularly true of Hakoah Vienna.

### **The founding of the Hakoah Vienna Sports Club**

Hakoah Vienna was formed in 1909 by Zionist football enthusiasts.<sup>43</sup> In 1979 Siegmund Zollschan, who attended the first meeting of the Hakoah Vienna Club, stated that the foundation of Hakoah occurred after a game of football between VAC Budapest and the reserve team of Vienna Cricket and Football Club in 1908.<sup>44</sup> The initial meeting of Hakoah took place a little later — around early January 1909 at the home of four brothers named Weinberg. It was attended by a member of VAC who explained how that club in Budapest operated.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> J. Bunzl, *Hoppauf Hakoah: Jüdischer Sport in Österreich. Von den Anfängen bis in die Gegenwart*, Junius Verlag, Vienna, 1987, p. 18.

<sup>44</sup> Formed in 1894 and later known as FK Austria. See J. Walvin, *The Peoples Game: The History of Football Revisited*, London, 1994, p. 104.

<sup>45</sup> S. Zollschan, 'Einer Der An Der Wiege Stand', in A. Hanak (ed.), *Jahre Hakoah Vienna 1909-1979*, Tel Aviv 1979, p. 24.

Eisen also stated that VAC assisted in the establishment of Hakoah. The link to VAC was important because that club had been founded by 'ardently Zionist university students' and was 'a deliberate and conscious Zionist undertaking'.<sup>46</sup> The principal founding members of Hakoah Vienna were Dr Fritz Beda-Löhner<sup>47</sup> and Dr I H Körner, who was later important in the founding of Sydney Hakoah. Körner was a dentist who played football for Sparta Prague. Later he ran Hakoah Vienna full time.<sup>48</sup> Hans Klimt a prominent Hakoahner both in Vienna and Sydney claimed that Hakoah Vienna came into being on 27 May 1909. Speaking on the occasion of the thirty fifth anniversary of the founding of Hakoah, celebrated at the Tarbuth Club<sup>49</sup> in Sydney on 27 May 1944 Klimt stated:

Let me take you back to Vienna 1909. Around the Augarten there were many Jewish boys who expressed their sports ambitions by playing soccer and of course their means not being great to any extent they were quite happy to play with a 'Fitzenball'. Here it was that Artur Baar picked gifted players which later on formed the fundament of our Hakoah. Thirty five years ago in May 1909 the soccer club Hakoah was founded under the chairmanship of Dr Fritz Beda-Löhner.<sup>50</sup>

Klimt's family was heavily involved in the early years of Hakoah Vienna and his brother Ernst was instrumental in setting up the highly successful field hockey section of the club. Another brother Fritz also became heavily involved in the hockey club after World War I.<sup>51</sup> Hans Klimt himself played hockey continuously for the club from 1920 to 1938.<sup>52</sup> He was in constant contact with the administration of Hakoah in exile during World War II. He was the key organiser of the Hakoah Club in the immediate post war years in Sydney.

<sup>46</sup> G Eisen, *The Maccabiah Games: A History of the Jewish Olympics*, pp. 31-32.

<sup>47</sup> Dr Fritz Beda-Löhner, President of Hakoah, was murdered in Auschwitz on 4 December 1942, See R Löhner, 'Steinzeitfussball. Mein Bruder Beda', J H Schoeps (ed.), *Hakoah: Ein Jüdischer Sportverein in Wien 1909-1995*, Verlag Derapfel, Vienna, 1995, p. 17.

<sup>48</sup> A Barr, Hakoah Display, Jewish Museum of Vienna, 1995.

<sup>49</sup> The Tarbuth was a Zionist Club in George Street Sydney.

<sup>50</sup> Text of the speech delivered by Hans Klimt at the Tarbutt Club, 27 May 1944. Personal papers of Hans Klimt, former member of Hakoah Vienna, past president of Sydney Hakoah and member of Brith Hakoah 1909, held by author

<sup>51</sup> H Klimt, *Hakoah: Landhockey-Sektion*, unpub. manuscript.

<sup>52</sup> Interview Hans Klimt, 1996.

The adoption of the Hakoah name (emphasising physical strength) by the new club signalled its aggressive purpose to engage Gentiles in the sports arena. Founded by Zionists, and encouraged by the ardently Zionist VAC, Hakoah Vienna was committed to muscular Judaism.

Hakoah chose blue and white as its colours and the Magen David as its emblem. This symbolised the club's Jewish identity and the Zionist commitment to a national homeland. As Hans Klimt noted:

[Using the] Star of David as badge, was a direct realisation of Max Nordau's call for a 'muscle-Judaism': to practically turn Jewish boys into young Jews. To pursue sport as Jews, in blue-white colours, with the blue white colours (on) the Star of David were at the same time the right response to assimilation, because in many ways it meant orientation on us and a rejection of the cowardice submerging under a strange and false banner.<sup>53</sup>

The blue and white colours were also adopted by the *Blau-Weiss Wanderbünde* (hiking league) in Germany. This organisation, formed in 1912, expanded because Jewish people were excluded from leisure activities, and because of the official encouragement of sport and physical activity by the Zionist Congress. The official reason for the formation of Blau-Weiss was:

... solely out of the necessity of working for the physical, spiritual, and moral training and toughening of Jewish youth. A relatively great part of our youth suffers under the harmful influences of big city life ... The Blau-Weiss *Wanderbünde* seek to lead the young man to nature, [and] within nature to achieve his spiritual and moral rehabilitation and the awakening of an idealistic way of life.<sup>54</sup>

Blue and white were the colours of the Zionist flag, later the colours of Israel's flag which included the Magen David. A Jewish sports club became a way of promoting a Jewish identity, which increasingly was Zionist, despite heated debate over Zionism within the Jewish diaspora. Arthur Konchar jnr. pointed out that a majority of Jews in

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<sup>53</sup> A Barr, '70 Jahre Hakoah', A Hanak (ed.) *Jahre Hakoah Vienna 1909-1979*, p. 6.

<sup>54</sup> S M Poppel, *Zionism in Germany 1897-1933: The Shaping of a Jewish Identity*, p. 133.

turn-of-the-century Vienna remained true to bourgeois liberal attitudes and hopes. Only a minority opted for Zionism. However:

The founders of the Jewish sports movement were convinced Zionists who regarded the individual integration of Jews into Austrian society as problematic and advocated a 'collective' or 'national' development of the Jewish minority. Zionist practice generated an experience of self respect, resistance, honour and identity, thereby engendering a 'subculture' that was highly attractive, not only for those Jews who were firmly convinced of the Zionist ideology, but also — and in particular — for many young Jewish people. This found expression in Hakoah, especially in view of the fact that anti-Semitism and German nationalist tendencies were becoming more and more obvious in the early twentieth century.<sup>55</sup>

### **Hakoah Vienna's early years**

The formation of Hakoah Vienna was vehemently opposed by a large section of the assimilationist Viennese Jewish population which believed that 'it only played into the hands of the racial anti-Semites'.<sup>56</sup> The club faced two major difficulties: the anti-Semitism of many of their opponents and the resistance by many competent Jewish football players to playing for Hakoah, because of the club's avowed Zionist stance and rejection of assimilationist tendencies. Initially a football club only, Hakoah played out its early years in the lowest league in Vienna on the worst pitches against hostile teams, watched by antagonistic spectators and with little support from its own community:

They had to play against teams whose members and fans were animated by more than just an ordinary opponent. To lose to a team of Jews meant double disgrace: emotions ran high and anti-Semitic abuse, both verbal and physically on the playing fields and in the stands was frequent.<sup>57</sup>

In the years before World War I, Hakoah lived a somewhat peripatetic existence, moving from ground to ground before finally renting a ground at Bruckhausen in the

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<sup>55</sup> A Konchar, *A Jewish Sports Club in Vienna, 1909-1995*, p. 2.

<sup>56</sup> G Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews: The Tragedy of Success 1880s-1900s*, p. 130.

<sup>57</sup> G Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews: The Tragedy of Success 1880s-1900s*, p. 130.

21<sup>st</sup> Municipal District of Vienna in 1913. The club finally had a suitable pitch and, around this time, began to attract Jewish players from other clubs. However, Hakoah was not content just to run a football team. One of the most important characteristics of Hakoah Vienna was its fostering of a number of sports under its banner. Before World War I Hakoah became an all round sports club, with separate divisions catering for athletics, fencing, field hockey, handball, swimming and wrestling. Other sports also developed rapidly at the club including water polo, ice hockey, tennis and table tennis. They soon developed champions and champion teams. In central Europe multi-sports clubs were popular, but often the football section broke away to form an independent club.<sup>58</sup> This did not occur at Hakoah Vienna though football remained the flagship section of a united sports club.

The history of its field hockey team is typical of the development of a sport section under the umbrella of Hakoah Vienna. Field hockey, added in 1912, was formed by Bela Neumann and Ernst Klimt. Many members of the other sections of Hakoah played hockey when their own sports were out of season. The team managed to attract Jewish players from other clubs from an early stage, and in 1913 took part in challenge matches in a *Turner* and sports festival organised to coincide with the Zionist Congress held in Vienna that year. Hakoah lost only narrowly to the strong Bar Kochba team from Berlin. At Easter 1914 the hockey team travelled to Ostrava in Moravia where they were watched by large groups of Jewish youth.<sup>59</sup> Hockey did not function during World War I as almost all the players were called up for military service but was reformed after the war. Along with other sections of Hakoah, new members flocked to it from other Jewish clubs due to the anti-Semitic climate and the growing prestige of Hakoah. The hockey section led opposition to overt acts of anti-Semitism. Hans Klimt stated that:

The new arrivals blended in well with the older players and soon became loyal Hakoahner. At the time, the Aryans [sic] in an Austria drastically shrunk in size indulged themselves in particularly anti-Semitic behaviour and outrages took place constantly. When attacks on the temple 'Klausen' of the Eastern Jews were planned for a public holiday, its defence was entrusted to the hockey section. It can't be stressed too often how well it conducted itself, to prevent even the slightest annoyance.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Bill Murray, Interview, 1996.

<sup>59</sup> H Klimt, *Hakoah: Landhockey-Sektion*, p. 2.

<sup>60</sup> H Klimt, *Hakoah: Landhockey-Sektion*, p. 2.



Hakoah Vienna acquired characteristics that set it apart from other sports clubs in Europe in the inter-war years. Hakoah was avowedly Zionist, anti-assimilationist and was devoted to athletic excellence in a wide range of sports. There was an acceptance of both professionalism and amateurism at the club. The club accepted both the professionalism of its football and the amateur approach of sports such as swimming and athletics. The football team became one of the best in Europe in the 1920s. There was also an acceptance that sport should be provided for women and girls.

### **Women in Hakoah Vienna**

Sport was made available to women from the time Hakoah became a multi-sports club. In the Germanic world physical education had become part of Jewish girls' education towards the end of the nineteenth century, especially for the newly emerging middle classes who wished to conform to all things German. Traditionally, Jewish women were excluded from many activities. They were separated from the men at the synagogue, often looking down from a balcony as the menfolk prayed. Karl Haber suggested Hakoah was one of the first to encourage equality for girls and women.<sup>61</sup> He also made the point that those who ran Hakoah were pleased for women to participate in any number of sports, though social norms of the day often prevented them playing some sports. Women were excluded from football because the idea was not acceptable in Viennese society, rather than because Hakoah officials were opposed to the idea.<sup>62</sup>

Anne Pisker, who swam for Hakoah and Austria between 1932 and 1937, could not recall any discrimination against women playing sport. She believed Anglo-Saxon countries were far more sexist in the 1920s and 1930s than Austria, Hungary or Czechoslovakia. Pisker stated:

Don't forget Austria was very forward thinking — not bound by all that tradition that Britain and other Anglo-Saxon countries was. When I came to live in Britain in 1938, my headmistress was horrified with the short tight shorts I wore in the summer after school. Our swimming costumes were tight — very tight and high

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<sup>61</sup> Karl Haber, Interview, 1995, past resident of Hakoah Vienna and vice president of Asvo Vienna, Vienna, July 1995.

<sup>62</sup> K Haber, 'Kleine Chronik, Der HakoahWien — Teil 1 — 1908-1938', Jüdisches Museum Wien, *Hakoah: Ein Jüdischer Sportverein in Wien 1909-1995*, Verlag Der Apfel, Vienna, 1995, pp. 23-29.

cut — just like today, made for racing. I was amazed at the old-fashioned costumes they wore in England when I arrived. When I was at Hakoah I cannot remember one, not one sexist overtone. I cannot remember any discrimination against women or girls. There is no question there was absolute equality between the sexes at Hakoah.<sup>63</sup>

Many of Hakoah's most famous stars were women. For example, images of champion swimmer Hedy Bienenfeld (later Bienenfeld-Wertheimer after she married her coach) frequently appeared in the Jewish and mainstream press and she regularly appeared on magazine covers clad in brief swimming attire. The photograph below shows Bienenfeld on a magazine front-cover promoting cigarettes. Bienenfeld's career reflected the freedom achieved by women in Vienna and the lack of stigma attached to using body image and sport for financial gain. An interesting article appeared in 1937 showing sports women in 'civilian life', illustrating their wide range of activities from home to the office. Sportswomen were considered perfect role models for Jewish women and girls.

Women from Hakoah Vienna were prominent when politics and sport inevitably interacted. In a charged climate and at a time when debate raged in the USA over the holding of the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, three Hakoah swimmers — Judith Deutsch, Ruth Langer, and Lucie Goldner — refused to participate in the Games as part of the Austrian team at the Games. Anne Pisker, a swimmer next in line for selection supported her team mates' stance.<sup>64</sup> This caused a furore in Vienna, the brave stance seen by anti-Semites as yet another indicator of the disloyalty and selfishness of Jews. The women were banned for life by the Austrian Swimming Association and their records expunged. The ban was belatedly lifted by the Association in 1994, when all four swimmers received birthday cards and apologies from the Chancellor of Austria. Their records were also restored at this time.<sup>65</sup>

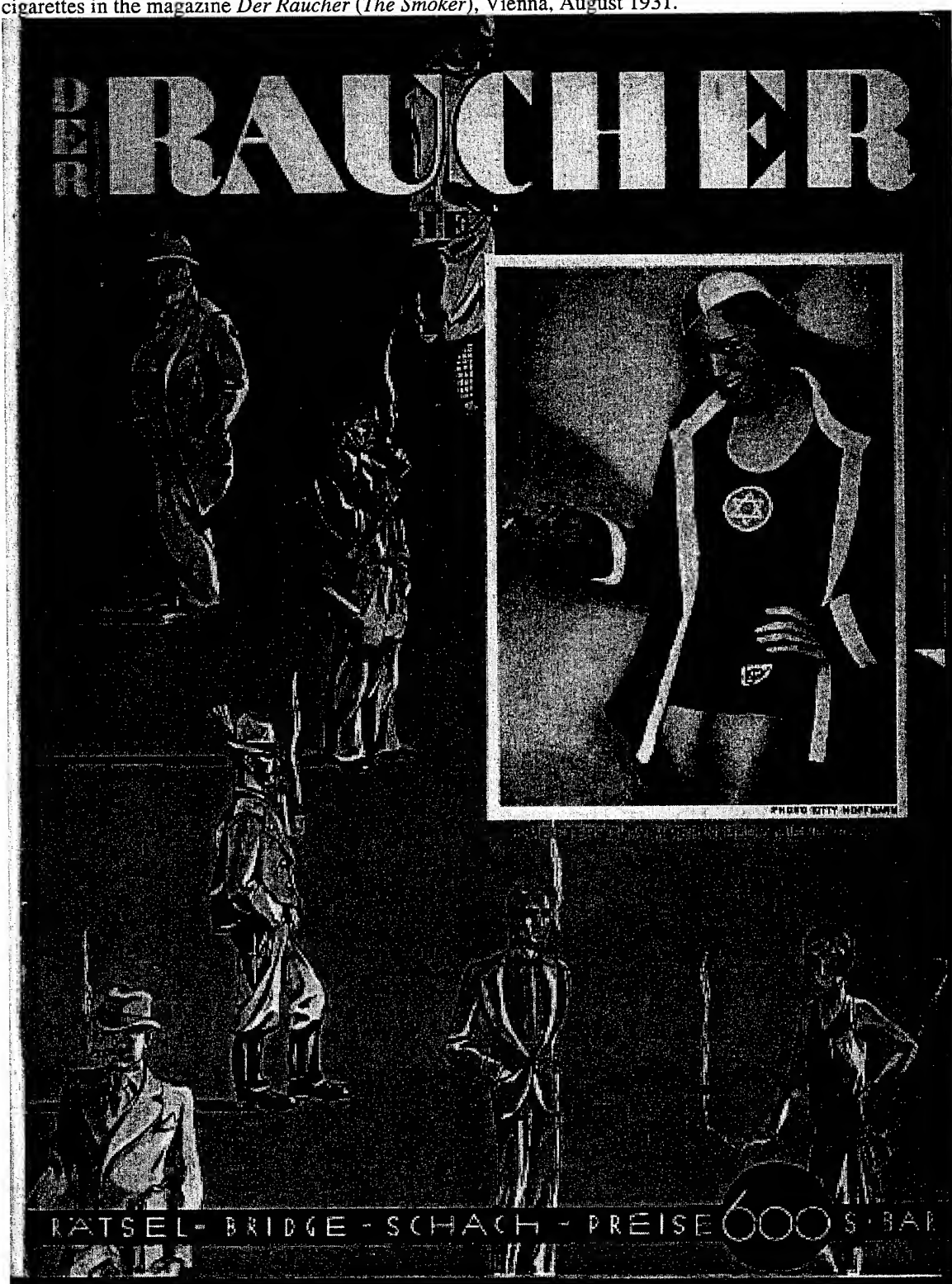
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<sup>63</sup> Anne Pisker, Interview, 1995. Pisker was a champion swimmer for Hakoah and Austria. Honours achieved by her included Austrian 4 x 100 m champion and individual championships, medals at the Maccabi Games in Palestine in 1935 and a first place in the annual swim across the Danube. She retired in 1937. In 1938 the headmistress of a summer school she attended in England had the presence of mind to write and invite her to come back. By this means she was able to escape Austria. She later married and settled in England where she had one son, who became an active member of the Maccabi Tennis Club for in London.

<sup>64</sup> J Bunzl, *Hoppauf Hakoah: Jüdischer Sport in Österreich*, p. 119.

<sup>65</sup> Anne Pisker, Interview, 1995.

Figure 2.2 Hedy Bienenfeld, Hakoah Vienna's champion swimmer of the 1930s advertising cigarettes in the magazine *Der Raucher* (*The Smoker*), Vienna, August 1931.



The swimmers were fully supported in this action by the Hakoah hierarchy — though the decision was entirely their own.<sup>66</sup> Perhaps the acceptance of women by Hakoah was seen as a necessity, for they would also be needed in the coming struggle for a Jewish homeland. As a predominantly Zionist club many of their ideas were left-leaning and progressive.

### **The golden years of Hakoah Vienna, 1918 to 1938**

It is one of the great ironies of the history of anti-Semitism in Vienna that by the outbreak of World War I in 1914, most Jews who lived there were loyal citizens who were prepared to fight for the cause of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The number of Jews in the armed forces was disproportionately high and many received medals and promotions during the conflict.<sup>67</sup> Among their number were many members of Hakoah, although the activities of the club continued during the war. Illustrations of former Hakoah sportsmen in uniform often appeared in Viennese newspapers.<sup>68</sup> Many Jews saw the war as an opportunity to disprove anti-Semitic stereotypes. Many were maimed or killed including Albin Candle, who had been Hakoah's goalkeeper in its early years. A number were decorated but honour was often withheld from them by Gentile citizens of Vienna.<sup>69</sup>

The war brought new problems for the Jewish population of central Europe in general, and Vienna in particular. As the Empire crumbled, many Austrians looked to attribute blame, and Jews were a convenient and traditional scapegoat. Berkley noted that 'despite their patriotism, the war did not decrease the sentiment against Jews. On the contrary, it whipped up such feelings to a level not seen since the 1890s'.<sup>70</sup> As the war continued anti-Semitism became more virulent and from 1916 leaflets appeared urging boycotts of Jewish merchants, doctors, attorneys and others.<sup>71</sup> There are a number of reasons for this resurgence of anti-Semitism. The influx of *Ostjuden* (Jews from the East), refugees from eastern Europe was a factor. They crowded into Vienna and were conspicuous on the streets with their different clothing and language.

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<sup>66</sup> Anne Pisker, Interview, 1995.

<sup>67</sup> G Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews: The Tragedy of Success 1880s-1900s*, p. 6.

<sup>68</sup> J Bunzl, *Hoppauf Hakoah: Jüdischer Sport in Österreich*, p. 48.

<sup>69</sup> G Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews: The Tragedy of Success 1880s-1900s*, p. 137.

<sup>70</sup> G Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews: The Tragedy of Success 1880s-1900s*, p. 137.

<sup>71</sup> G Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews: The Tragedy of Success 1880s-1900s*, p. 143.

There were some prominent Jews who fervently agitated against the war (especially members of *Poale Zion* — a left wing Labor Zionist group),<sup>72</sup> and were accused of being shirkers and unpatriotic. Other Jews were accused of becoming rich from the war, especially those who sold food at inflated prices. As enthusiasm for the war waned in Austria, people began to blame big business for its evils and the Jews in Austria were, in the eyes of many, associated closely with big business. The appearance of the *Ostjuden* was the physical manifestation of all their irrational fears.

Hakoah Vienna Sports Club emerged at the end of World War I in a much changed environment. The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy had collapsed and its member states had set up independent provisional governments. The new Emperor Karl had abdicated and an Austrian republic had come into being. The state of Austria was further reduced in size by the treaty of St Germain-en-Laye,<sup>73</sup> losing territory to Italy and the new states of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The consequences for Vienna were dire:

it had lost its *raison d'être* as the capital of the Empire and therefore many of its inhabitants had lost their occupation. There was a disproportion and a conflict of interests between the city, still very large, however much it had lost of its former importance and grandeur, and the provinces ... a case of a country used to a high standard of living, with a high standard of literacy and a tradition of disinterested bureaucracy, which was unable to cope with sudden impoverishment and with the conflict of interests between the city and the countryside.<sup>74</sup>

The Austria that remained was variously described as a 'mutilated trunk bleeding from every pore', a 'pathetic relic' and 'an impossible creation consisting of a huge world city and a few alpine valleys'.<sup>75</sup> All of this meant trouble for the Jewish population:

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<sup>72</sup> G Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews: The Tragedy of Success 1880s-1900s*, p. 137.

<sup>73</sup> R Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History of Europe Since The Congress Of Vienna*, Harper and Row, New York, 1973, p. 364.

<sup>74</sup> J Joll, *Europe since 1870: An International History*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1983, p. 295.

<sup>75</sup> Tape recording, History of Hakoah, Jewish Museum of Vienna, 1995.

The political instability and economic impoverishment that accompanied the birth pangs of the new Republic furnished, in themselves, ideal conditions for an upsurge in anti-Semitism ... When the Austro-Germans ruled and largely ran a vast empire, they could look down upon a host of other nationalities. They could also blame them for their many grievances. Now they had no one to feel superior to, and no one to attribute their misfortune to, except the Jews. The Jews had always been the primary internal target for Austro-German wrath; now they became the only target.<sup>76</sup>

During the war Hakoah had been run by the more elderly, those unfit for military duties, and those returning injured from the front. The immediate post-World War I years saw a great increase in the activities in the club as its numbers rapidly increased. The pre-war rise in levels of anti-Semitism was exacerbated by the various crises of the new republic which led to right wing groups gaining political power. This made Hakoah even more important for Jewish sports people who sought out the club to continue their activities. Since 1909, Hakoah had proved it could endure and did not shrink from problems related to anti-Semitism. The previous shunning of Hakoah by some Jews because of its committed Zionist stance evaporated '... many Jews who previously had opposed the club were now glad to be admitted'.<sup>77</sup>

There was a boom in football in Austria in 1919, when it became the major entertainment of the masses. In 1919-1920 the sport had already evolved from a sport for high school boys, expatriate Englishmen and Scotsmen and the middle classes into a fixture of proletarian suburban life. In a very short space of time this led to the commercialisation of the game and the emergence of professionalism. Hakoah Vienna was promoted to the 'first league' of Austria, encouraged by its staunch fans who supported the team even more when faced with anti-Semitism on the terraces. By attracting the leading Jewish players from other clubs, officials succeeded in establishing a tough and effective squad, which rivalled the other outstanding Viennese teams such as Rapid Vienna, Austria Vienna and Wacker.<sup>78</sup> Bill Murray has pointed out there were several Jewish supported teams in Vienna at this time and they frequently played against each other:

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<sup>76</sup> G Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews: The Tragedy of Success 1880s-1900s*, p. 149.

<sup>77</sup> A Barr, '70 Jahre Hakoah', p. 4.

<sup>78</sup> Tape recording, History of Hakoah, 1995.

... games between Hakoah and Austria were billed as Jews against Israelites, with supporters yelling insults at each other that would otherwise have been seen as anti-Semitic. On the other hand, nationalism could rise above religious culture, as in the case where Hakoah represented Vienna against the Jewish team from Budapest, Vivo Budapest,: Viennese supporters yelling: 'Come on Hakoah! Get stuck in to these Jews!'<sup>79</sup>

While Hakoah Vienna did not demand that its members become Zionists, the vast majority of members supported this cause.<sup>80</sup> The expression of a Jewish identity through sport was becoming more of a feature of Hakoah in the 1920s. The success of Hakoah also gave it legitimacy in the eyes of Viennese Jews, and confirmed it as a body able to stand up for Jews in Austria and to be recognised by them as a necessary and useful part of the Jewish polity. Over and above this Hakoah, especially the football team, became ambassadors abroad for Austria and for the Zionist cause. The team travelled extensively in Europe in the 1920s and early 1930s. It made two trips to the USA in 1926 and 1927 and also toured Palestine and Egypt in 1923.<sup>81</sup> Hakoah also involved itself in cultural activities forming a club orchestra in 1919 (which became regarded as one of the best amateur ensembles in Vienna) and a chess section existed for a number of years.<sup>82</sup>

The early 1920s were years of continuing growth for Hakoah. Although there remained other Jewish sports groups and clubs in Vienna, it was Hakoah that became pre-eminent and to which most Jewish sports fans in the city gave their allegiance. Hakoah's football games attracted large crowds. The post-War crowds were three times those of the pre-war years.<sup>83</sup> With increased gate money the football club became a big business leading to greater player professionalism, causing some controversy within the club. In a match between Hakoah and Rapid Vienna in late 1920 it was reported:

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<sup>79</sup> B Murray, *Football: A History of the World Game*, Scolar Press, Aldershot 1994, p. 103.

<sup>80</sup> Karl Haber, Interview, 1995.

<sup>81</sup> J Bunzl, *Hoppauf Hakoah: Jüdischer Sport in Österreich*, p. 68.

<sup>82</sup> A Konchar, *A Jewish Sports Club in Vienna, 1909-1995*, p. 3.

<sup>83</sup> B Murray, *Football: A History of the World Game*, p. 84. John Bunzl reported the scorline as 5-0 to Hakoah, J Bunzl, *Hoppauf Hakoah ; Jüdischer Sport in Österreich*, pp. 70-71.

The Danube was crossed by a gigantic crowd. All available means of transport — even horse drawn carriages — were mobilised. The tram system was unable to cope with the rush on its own. The Florisdorf pitch had to be sealed off an hour early.<sup>84</sup>

Such popularity resulted in the commercialisation of football in Austria leading to full professionalism. In 1923 the Hakoah football team travelled to London and defeated that season's beaten FA Cup finalists West Ham United 4-0 at Upton Park.<sup>85</sup>

Having gained this famous victory in England, Hakoah proceeded to win the Austrian first league championship in the 1924/25 season. This was the pinnacle of the club's domestic success. It did not win the first league title again and even spent two seasons in the second league. The sudden decline in the Hakoah Vienna football team's fortunes after the championship season, has been blamed on the tours undertaken to the USA in 1926 and 1927. Unfortunately for the club, some of its best players transferred to US clubs for better money than they were receiving in Austria. In 1929 the Hakoah All Stars of New York, including former Hakoah Vienna players, won the US National Challenge Cup. Hakoah Vienna's USA tour matches in 1926 drew crowds of 25 000, 30 000 and 36 000.<sup>86</sup>

The first fully professional league season in Austria was 1924/25, the season of Hakoah's championship. Yet Hakoah had been paying players in one form or another since 1920. While the debate over the relative merits of professionalism and amateurism had been ongoing since the rise of organised sport in Europe, within Hakoah the concept of professionalism created its own problems.<sup>87</sup> For many Viennese Jews the Hakoah Football Club had become the object of Jewish identification. Some members of the club saw a contradiction between the political objectives of the club and the introduction of sport as a business. However, to compete at the highest level in football Hakoah needed to be professional, and it was deemed necessary to be at the top level to achieve its political goals. Despite the debate, after the 1926 tour to the USA, the club continued to pay its players. At no stage was the amateur status of the Olympic sports within the club brought into question. The fact that the club managed to keep amateurs and professionals, community-oriented and politically-committed athletes unified speaks highly of the club's leadership and spirit. Hakoah was able to accommodate a diversity

<sup>84</sup> *Arbiter Zeitung*, Vienna, 16 November 1920.

<sup>85</sup> B Murray, *Football: A History of the World Game*, p. 90.

<sup>86</sup> B Murray, *Football: A History of the World Game*, p. 262.

<sup>87</sup> J Bunzl, *Hoppauf Hakoah: Jüdischer Sport in Österreich*, pp. 78-79.



of views to achieve an even stronger profile within the community in the inter-war years. A supporter of the period was clear about the position of the club in the community:

The most passionate expression of our national Jewish commitment was found in sports, in our affection for the Hakoah Sports Club. We knew each and every star of each and every kind of sport ... but above all we were enthusiastic football fans. For years I never missed one single match, crossing Vienna on foot just to be there.<sup>88</sup>

The number of active sportsmen and women in the club reached 1 500 by 1920.<sup>89</sup> When a new sports ground and sports centre was built in 1923, the football stadium accommodated 25 000 spectators and there were facilities for athletics, field hockey, handball and table tennis.<sup>90</sup>

Adding to the success of the football team, the field hockey team won the Austrian championship in 1924. Klimt stated that when Hakoah built its new sports complex:

Hakoah's hockey players were universally envied, since all other hockey clubs in Vienna had to play on football grounds — to which they were only reluctantly admitted — whereas Hakoah now had a dedicated hockey area, with changing rooms attached and, of particular importance, its own spectator areas for members and the public. From there, the team received great encouragement, and often also protection against anti-Semitic referees.<sup>91</sup>

The use of Hakoah members as bodyguards became commonplace in Vienna from this period on. At football games, which were attended by much larger crowds than hockey, as well as swimming, Hakoah wrestlers were employed to protect Hakoah teams and supporters from anti-Semitic attacks.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> A Marak, quoted in display, Jewish Museum of Vienna, July 1995.

<sup>89</sup> Tape recording, History of Hakoah, 1995

<sup>90</sup> A Konchar, *A Jewish Sports Club in Vienna, 1909-1995*, p. 3.

<sup>91</sup> H Klimt, *Hakoah: Landhockey-Sektion*, p. 3.

<sup>92</sup> Karl Haber, Interview, 1995.

### Hakoah's success and destruction

Hakoah's new sports centre was created in the Krieau area of Vienna. The site remains a symbol both of the success and failure of Hakoah, failure in that the club was destroyed by the Nazis in 1938. In the 1920s and 1930s the complex provided unique sports facilities for the Jewish community in Vienna, becoming a focal point of Jewish life in the city. The Krieau was the theatre where the drama of Jewish life in inter-war Vienna was played out to great effect. On the playing field, Hakoah gave best expression to *Muskel Judentum* with its skilful but uncompromising play, and on the terraces and in the stands its supporters gave vocal support. The sectarian battle between opposing spectators could perhaps be compared to the sectarian rivalry that exists between the fans of Glasgow Celtic and Glasgow Rangers in Scotland.<sup>93</sup> In the case of Hakoah however, the club did not rely on the police to provide protection, rather its own members protected its people.

Post-World War I Hakoah was probably the strongest all-round sports club of its era in the world. This would hardly have seemed possible when Nordau called for *Muskel Judentum* in 1898. Hakoah challenged the aphysical Jewish stereotype with its sporting achievements around the world. The club had beaten West Ham United in London, won the Austrian Championship in 1924 and provided footballers for the *Wunderteam*, the brilliant Austrian national football team of the 1930s. Players such as Bela Guttmann were football legends and swimmers such as Judith Deutch and Heidi Bienenfeld were superstars of the time. Ticher reported that:

The respect, almost bordering on awe with which they (Hakoah) were received in Berlin in 1924 (and not just by the Jewish community), speaks volumes not only for the status of the club itself, but also of the relative strengths of German and Austrian football.<sup>94</sup>

At the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1932, wrestler Mickey Hirschl further enhanced the name of Hakoah by winning two bronze medals for Austria. Hirschl, who migrated to Australia after World War II, provided a link with Sydney Hakoah, having been a

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<sup>93</sup> B Murray, *The Old Firm*, John Donald, Edinburgh, 1984.

<sup>94</sup> M Ticher, 'Jews and Football in Berlin 1890-1933: A Case Study of Identity and Continuity in German Sport', p. 88.

member of that club from his arrival in Australia until his death in Kingsford in Sydney in 1994.

Hakoah dominated Austrian swimming in the 1930s. Fritz Löwy and Hedy Bienenfeld-Wertheimer won gold medals at the European championships and the water polo team was Austrian champion from 1924 to 1928.<sup>95</sup> In 1932 the Hakoah team represented Austria at the first Maccabi Games held at Tel Aviv in Palestine and was the champion team.

When the German army marched into Austria on 14 March 1938 it meant the beginning of the destruction of Viennese Jewry, for so long despised by Adolf Hitler. Because the club was a beacon of the Viennese Jewish community Hakoah Vienna was one of the Nazi's first targets. Hakoah was banned and the club dismantled soon after the Germans entered Vienna. At that time, the painstakingly rebuilt soccer team was one point ahead of Austria-Fiat at the top of the Austrian first league. After its forced disbandment the club was able to help many of its members escape from Austria.

Hakoah Vienna's members were dispersed throughout the world and a coordinating office under Dr I H Körner was set up in Tel Aviv. A newsletter, *Hakoah in Emigration*, was established by which members could keep track of each other and offer assistance if possible. Unfortunately, not all members of Hakoah escaped the Holocaust. Together with their president Fritz Beda-Löhner, at least 36 Hakoahners were killed. Such a small number from such a large club emphasises the organisational capabilities of the club's administration in exile, and the effectiveness of the network they quickly established around the world.

The Krieau complex was appropriated by the puppet municipal authorities in 1938. It suffered much bomb damage during World War II. In 1945, Viennese authorities offered to return the Krieau to the Hakoah Club on the condition the Club pay for the removal of rubble and its rebuilding.<sup>96</sup> By then a small number of Jews had returned to Vienna. Some were Jewish refugees from eastern Europe, some were returning Viennese determined to rebuild and some had nowhere else to go. These Jews did not have the will or the finances to recreate the old stadium and so it remained in the hands of the authorities. The small but rejuvenated Hakoah Vienna in the post-World War II

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<sup>95</sup> J Bunzl, *Hoppauf Hakoah: Jüdischer Sport in Österreich*, p. 104.

<sup>96</sup> Karl Haber, Interview, 1995.

years moved to premises on the outskirts of the city where it continued to achieve success. Its football team competed in a local amateur league until it was disbanded in the mid-1950s.

## Conclusions

At the Second Zionist Congress at Basel in 1898, Max Nordau introduced the idea of muscular Judaism to challenge stereotypes of the Jews as a weak and feminised people. The idea of muscular Judaism also had a practical dimension for Zionists, as they foresaw that it was likely that physical force would one day be needed in the struggle for a Jewish homeland. Zionist leaders accepted the idea, Zionist literature encouraged it and many Jewish sporting clubs were quickly established throughout Europe. The idea of the muscular Jew was also taken up by assimilationist Jews, who from the late nineteenth century found themselves excluded from many sports and Turner clubs, particularly in Germany and Austria. Many responded by forming their own clubs.

Hakoah Vienna was formed in 1909 by Zionists and it adopted Nordau's philosophy. Despite opposition from both assimilationist Jews and anti-Semites, Hakoah Vienna soon prospered. After World War I, it became one of the most successful multi-sports clubs in Europe. In the 1920s it built its own sports centre, including a 25 000 seat stadium. As fascism grew and anti-Semitism became more virulent, Hakoah aggressively challenged it through sport. At times members of Hakoah used physical force to protect its members.

Despite its avowedly Zionist principles, Hakoah's members proved themselves to be loyal and contributing citizens of both the old empire and the new republic of Austria. In doing so they challenged many of the myths about the nature of the Jew. Nevertheless, the anti-Semites found new ways to incorporate the old stereotypes and cliches into the new anti-Jewish dogma. In response Hakoah Vienna provided a focus for the expression of Jewish community identity between the wars. With Hakoah, Jews could compete at any level in the same activities as Gentiles and win. Hakoah was perhaps too successful in the eyes of the anti-Semites. Far removed from the scene in Europe, Henry Ford proclaimed in 1921:

Jews are not sportsmen ... Whether this is due to their physical lethargy, their dislike of unnecessary physical action or their serious cast of mind, others may

decide ... It may be a defect in their character, or it may not; it is nevertheless a fact which discriminating Jews unhesitatingly acknowledge.<sup>97</sup>

In Vienna, Hakoah challenged such thinking. From 1909, many Jews in Vienna needed to be convinced of the utility of sport and of the advantages of competing as an identifiably Jewish unit. Hakoah was a sports and a political movement and also encouraged the arts. Hakoah adopted the philosophy 'sport is culture and is the most highly developed form of art',<sup>98</sup> echoing the words of Pierre de Coubertin. Consistent with this ideal, the club provided public lectures, dances, theatre, as well as grand Viennese balls. The Hakoah orchestra was amateur champion of Vienna from 1921-1925 under the baton of Salomon Braslawsky.<sup>99</sup>

During the 1920s and 1930s Jews could not be in doubt that anti-Semitism, particularly in central Europe, was as rampant as it had been for centuries. In this climate Hakoah provided camaraderie, protection, defiance and pride of race, while at the same time employing a political philosophy of which the ultimate goal was the mass exodus of European Jewry to an independent Jewish homeland. In doing this, its members had been carried along not just by *Muskel Judentum* but by the rising tide of organised and professional sport in the first half of the twentieth century. Henry Ford was certain that the Jewish intelligentsia was totally opposed to the idea of Jewish sports. However, these simple words of support written in 1939 by Sigmund Freud, in support of the dispersed but still very active members of the ruined Hakoah, provided a fitting reproach to such a perspective. It demonstrated that Hakoah and its ideals appealed to a Jewish intellectual.

Dear Sirs,

Feb 16 1939.

If you want my name for your Patronage Council you may have it. It is the least I could do for you and I am sorry I can do no more in my actual condition.

Yours with high regards,

Sigmund Freud.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>97</sup> P Levine, *Ellis Island to Ebbetts Field: Sport and the American Jewish Experience*, p. 4.

<sup>98</sup> Tape recording, 'History of Hakoah', 1995.

<sup>99</sup> J Bunzl, *Hoppauf Hakoah: Jüdischer Sport in Österreich*, p. 106.

<sup>100</sup> S Freud, reprinted in his original handwriting in *Hakoah in Emigration* [sic], no. 15, London, 6 May 1939.

Hakoah Vienna members were scattered around the world after 1938. Some fled to Australia to establish Hakoah in Sydney. In its first two decades Sydney Hakoah strove to uphold the traditions of its Viennese forebear. Hakoah Vienna left an indelible mark on the minds of its former members and for Jews everywhere its name and memory symbolised Jewish pride and a willingness to fight for Zionist principles.

### Chapter Three

#### Sport in the Sydney Jewish Community 1900 to 1939

‘Every athlete should be a sport on and off the field and moreover be a credit to Jewry always’.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter will discuss the development of the Jewish community in Sydney in the first 40 years of the twentieth century and the place of sport in the community. It is important to understand the nature of the community and its structures, governance, level of Jewish identification, demography, and the ways in which Sydney Jews participated in sport and why they did so. The discussion will focus mainly on the 1920s, as it was in this decade that Jewish community sport was developed and a sporting infrastructure established.

The Sydney Jewish community, existing at the periphery of the diaspora, was largely immune from the virulent anti-Semitism that occurred in Europe. Nevertheless, anti-Semitism did exist in subtle ways. Whether or not Australian Jews should support the Zionist cause became a long running and passionate debate in the community, but Zionists in Australia were in the minority.

Sport is an important part of Australian culture as demonstrated by Richard Cashman and many other scholars.<sup>2</sup> With their relative freedom in Australia, Jews participated in sport without too many problems although there were some instances of exclusion.<sup>3</sup> There is anecdotal evidence that Jews attempted to form their own sporting clubs in the early years of the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup> This was probably from the simple desire to participate, as many Australians did, in sport with friends and co-religionists.

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<sup>1</sup> E S Marks, address to Maccabean Amateur Athletic Club Annual Dinner, 16 April 1925, *Hebrew Standard*, 24 April 1925.

<sup>2</sup> R Cashman, *Sport in the National Imagination; Australian Sport in the Federation Decades*, Walla Walla Press, Sydney, 2002, R Cashman, *Paradise of Sport*, Oxford University Press, Sydney, 1995; D Adair and W Vamplew, *Sport in Australian History*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997; D Booth and C Tatz, *One Eyed: A View of Australian Sport*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2000.

<sup>3</sup> See B Stoddart and C Tatz, *Royal Sydney Golf Club: The First Hundred Years*, C Tatz, *A Course of History: Monash Country Club 1931-2001*, M Phillips, ‘Ethnicity and Class at the Brisbane Golf Club’.

<sup>4</sup> For example, M Swibel ‘A History of Australian Jewish Sport’, *Hakoah Star*, vol. 5. no. 7, 1981

In the 1920s there was an upsurge of sporting activity among Jews, officially sanctioned by both the rabbis and the secular leadership. This led to the establishment of Jewish-only sporting clubs and of structures to organise and govern sport. By the time the refugees from Austria and Germany began to arrive in Sydney in the late 1930s, sport was well organised in the community.

The following questions are discussed in this chapter. What was the makeup of the Sydney Jewish community and what changes occurred between 1900 and beginning of World War II? What was the nature and extent of anti-Semitism in Sydney? What was the nature of Jewish sporting involvement? To what extent was Jewish sport in Sydney influenced by muscular Judaism?

### **Jews in Australia**

There were at least eight Jews (and possibly as many as fourteen) on the first fleet that arrived in Sydney Cove in January 1788. While most of these were convicts, free Jewish settlers began arriving in 1809<sup>5</sup> and became part of the life of the colony. From their number emerged many people who became prominent in politics, business, the arts, medicine, the law and sport. From the middle of the nineteenth century an organised community existed, establishing its first synagogue in Bridge Street Sydney in 1830, which became a focus for communal life. The community was, as was the wider community, British oriented, and the chief rabbi was British. However, laymen controlled general matters while the rabbi dealt with ritual and the religious sphere of life.<sup>6</sup>

According to Getzler, Jews demanded equality of rights in the community from the outset and did not rely on some 'acts of toleration or favour' as Jews in Europe had had to do.<sup>7</sup> Honig stated that Jews openly fought against prejudice while at the same

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<sup>5</sup> N Cream, 'Isaac Leo Lyon: The First Free Jewish Migrant to Australia', *Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society*, vol. XII, no. 1, 1993, pp. 3-15. Prior to Cream's research it was believed the first free Jewish settler to arrive in Australia was Esther Isaacs in 1816. That is repeated in many histories of Australian Jewry.

<sup>6</sup> E Honig, *Zionism in Australia 1920-1939: The Formative Years*, Mandelbaum Trust, Sydney, 1997, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> I Getzler, *Neither Toleration nor Favour*, MUP, Melbourne 1970.



time cultivating an 'Australian way of life' in the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup> The Judaism they practised was orthodox (although many rituals practised in eastern Europe were not practised in Australia) and the community was almost entirely English speaking.<sup>9</sup>

While the overwhelming majority of Jews in Australia originated in Britain, Jewish immigrants from other European countries arrived from 1851 with a significant number of them being German speaking. Honig stated that between 1851 and 1880, 70 per cent of Jewish arrivals in Australia were from Germany and 20 per cent from eastern Europe. From 1880 to 1921, 60 per cent came from eastern Europe and 30 per cent from Germany.<sup>10</sup> Most of the non-English speaking Jews congregated in Melbourne, resulting in more cultural diversity within that community. The Australian Jewish community was never a large one (see table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Jewish population of New South Wales and Australia 1841-1933

Year	NSW	Australia
1841	856	1 183
1851	979	1 886
1861	1 759	5 486
1871	2 395	6 946
1881	3 266	9 125
1891	5 484	13 809
1901	6 447	15 239
1911	7 660	17 287
1921	10 150	21 615
1933	10 305	23 553

*Australian Census, ABS, 1841-1933*

Despite immigration, the population rose slowly from 1 183 in 1841 to just 23 553 in 1933. In terms of this thesis, we can apply Isajiw's definition of ethnicity to the group. Those who attended the synagogue identified themselves as Jewish and were

<sup>8</sup> E Honig, *Zionism in Australia*, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> H L Rubenstein, 'From Jewish non-distinctiveness to group invisibility: Australian Jewish identity and responses, 1830-1950', W D Rubenstein (ed.), *Jews in the Sixth Continent*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney 1987, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> E Honig, *Zionism in Australia*, p. 5.

regarded as such by the wider community, as were many who did not attend. Australians could ascribe Jewish ethnicity to people according to their perceived 'looks' and also according to their family names. We can define the group as a community because as a group they centred their activities and social contacts around the synagogue.

The other institution that helped define the Jewish community was the Jewish press. There were attempts to establish a Jewish press from the 1840s, because the community was widely scattered around Australia with about 40 per cent living in rural areas.<sup>11</sup> These attempts failed, but in 1895 the *Hebrew Standard* appeared and it has continued (with two name changes) ever since. The first edition of the *Hebrew Standard* contained a confident mission statement. It stated that:

The *Hebrew Standard of Australasia* is now presented to you for review and judgement ... our determined resolve to represent the Jews of the Southern Hemisphere ... this is a publication entirely conducted by Jews, and shall be solely their own; by control; by sentiment; by its orthodox avowals; and governed by such noble sentiments: 'I am a Jew, I was born a Jew, and I should be a poltroon and a coward, as well as a fool, if I were not proud of belonging to a race which has given Isaiah to the world' ... we have promises of sufficient support from leading business houses which guarantee the continuation of the production of this journal ...<sup>12</sup>

This newspaper spoke frequently of the Jewish 'community' in this first issue. The editor noted that the community saw itself as a 'race' apart or an ethnic group. The first issue carried no reference to sport though there was reference to young people playing games. The editor hinted at some dissatisfaction with the younger generation and their 'growing tendency to irreligion'.<sup>13</sup> He was also alarmed at the practice of marrying outside the community, not rearing children as observant Jews.

The establishment of a Jewish education system was another dimension of the Jewish community. Between 1850 and 1880 the extension of state aid to Jewish

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<sup>11</sup> S D Rutland, *Pages of History: A Century of the Australian Jewish Press*, Griffin Press, Sydney, 1995, p. 19.

<sup>12</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 1 November 1895.

<sup>13</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 1 November 1895.

schools in New South Wales and Victoria saw the establishment of day schools.<sup>14</sup> The Sydney Hebrew School was established in Sussex Street in 1868 and reached a peak of 175 children in 1872, 145 of them Jewish. When the Public Institutions Act of 1880 abolished state aid to denominational schools, it was decided to close the school. The notion had also taken root that it was undesirable to segregate Jewish children from their Christian neighbours for fear this would enhance anti-Semitism.<sup>15</sup> This move was consistent with the notion of community non-distinctiveness. The idea was to retain primary relationships such as marriage, family, friends, clubs and of course religious practice as a community, but in cultural habits such as dress, language and behaviour to be indistinguishable from Christian neighbours.<sup>16</sup> Added to this was the notion that Jews were loyal citizens of Australia and the Empire. David Miller has stated that:

citizenship is, and has been seen to be a valuable status, and states therefore wish to restrict its possession to those who identify themselves with the nation and are carriers of the right cultural identity ... to give citizenship rights freely to all-comers is to risk undermining the conditions of mutual trust and assurance that make responsible citizenship possible.<sup>17</sup>

Because of the dominance of Anglo-Australian ideals, Jewish leaders were keen to avoid overt displays of Jewishness. This policy of acculturation, sought to both maintain community, and to promote assimilation. According to Castles and Davidson, assimilation advances 'the important principle that immigration should not bring about significant social and cultural change in the receiving society'.<sup>18</sup> Given that the increase in the Jewish population of Australia in the twentieth century was due to the arrival of many non-British immigrants, this principle played an important role in how the community believed it should act in the host society. 'Community leaders expressed the need for Anglo-Saxon conformity' and expected the new arrivals to renounce their 'culture in favour of the behavioural norms of

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<sup>14</sup> E Honig, *Zionism in Australia*, p. 6.

<sup>15</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, p. 69.

<sup>16</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, p. 141.

<sup>17</sup> D Miller, *Citizenship and National Identity*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2002, p. 89.

<sup>18</sup> S Castles and A Davidson, *Citizenship and Migration: Globalisation and the politics of belonging*, MacMillan Press, London, 2000, p. 61.

Australian society'.<sup>19</sup> This encouraged Jewish participation in Australian sporting culture.

### Anti-Semitism

Histories of Jewish Australia from 1840 to 1940, invariably speak of a community self-consciously living in a state of 'communal non-distinctiveness', and at the same time recount how fortunate the community was because of a lack of anti-Semitism. It is true that Jews in Australia never suffered official exclusions or were ever forced to live in ghettos, or to wear any identifying badges. Despite the fact that Jewish figures such as John Monash and Isaac Isaacs were considered proof Australia was a tolerant nation (notwithstanding the White Australia policy and treatment of Aborigines), anti-Semitism has played a role in the national psyche. A typical example of the rhetoric of Australia's alleged historical tolerance of Jews is W D Rubenstein's statement 'Australia manifested little anti-Semitism of the European type, and some Jews rose to the highest place in land'.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, in his seminal article on ethnic ideas in Australia Douglas Cole explained that anti-Semitism was an integral part of Australian notions of being 'white' and 'British' that underpinned the White Australia policy introduced by the Federal Government as soon as Australia became an independent nation on 1 January 1901. Cole explained that:

White but non-Anglo-Saxon groups fell victim to this blending of ethnocentrist strands. Keeping Australia 'morally' white, white 'in the broadest sense of the term', meant aversion even to 'technically' white groups. Jews were frequent targets of such hostility, being viewed in the usual ethnic stereotypes of 'sweaters', pawnshop specialists and instinctual parasites.<sup>21</sup>

Although the transplantation of European style anti-Semitism to Australia may have been muted, it nevertheless persisted in the minds of many people, and Jews were as aware of it as any Jew living in a ghetto in Poland. In his discussion of Zionism in Australia, Honig noted that there was 'little open anti-Semitism to contend with and

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<sup>19</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, p. 143.

<sup>20</sup> W D Rubenstein, *Judaism in Australia*, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> D Cole, "'The Crimson Thread of Kinship': Ethnic Ideas in Australia, 1870-1914", *Historical Studies*, vol.14, no. 56, April 1970.

so one of the basic motivating factors of Zionism was absent, since emotional ideological arguments in support of a Zionist solution to the Jewish problem were not pressing or even relevant to the Jews in Australia'.<sup>22</sup> The over-riding religious or ethnic divide in Australia in this era was the sectarian divide between the British-Australian<sup>23</sup> Protestants and the Catholic Irish.<sup>24</sup> Sectarianism was the big issue, closely followed by fear of the 'Yellow Peril'. The Jewish community was too small to be noticed even though anti-Semitism existed.

Colin Tatz has pointed out that 'almost no anti-Semitism', or 'virtually no anti-Semitism' does not mean that no anti-Semitism exists.<sup>25</sup> Tatz, who has described anti-Semitism as 'normal in western thinking', neatly summed this up in his history of the Monash Golf Club in Sydney:<sup>26</sup>

Anti-Semitism takes many forms. It is not a disease, curable by counselling, explanation or educational inoculation, but an integral part of western intellectual baggage; it even occurs in countries that have never known or experienced a Jewish presence. *Smith's Weekly* and *The Bulletin*, among others in the first half of the last century, provided abundant evidence of just how prominent European ideas about Jews were down under.<sup>27</sup>

The popular press made it abundantly clear that such views existed as Tatz noted. The appearance of such themes in widely circulated publications, such as *the Bulletin*, demonstrated that it had an audience that concurred.

In his critique of right wing politics in Australia, Andrew Moore discussed anti-Semitism as part of the Australian labour movement's 'money power critique'.<sup>28</sup> This critique was developed through the best known published examples of anti-Semitism in Australia, Frank Anstey's *The Kingdom of Shylock*, published in 1915

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<sup>22</sup> E Honig, *Zionism in Australia*, p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> To use the term Anglo-Australian would be to exclude the Scots and the Welsh. Scots were prominent in the Protestant church(es) in Australia.

<sup>24</sup> For an extensive discussion of this topic see P O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 1987.

<sup>25</sup> C Tatz, *A Course of History: Monash Country Club 1931-2001*, p. 31.

<sup>26</sup> C Tatz, 'Jews, Golf and History', unpub. conference paper, Sporting Traditions XIII, Adelaide, July 2001.

<sup>27</sup> C Tatz, *A Course of History: Monash Country Club 1931-2001*, p. 20.

and reprinted in various editions in the period to 1921. Anstey claimed a direct link between Jews and the evils of finance capital. In an analysis of Anstey's writings, Peter Love stated that although Anstey's anti-Semitic references diminished over time (probably due to many supporters of Anstey deploring its use) the stereotype which:

... was so deeply embedded in the popular imagination that neither Anstey nor most of his contemporary readers would have been easily persuaded that there was anything wrong with an emphasis on ethnic origins of a family whose fortunes had been made in banking and finance. It is in the logic of his analysis of the structure of modern capitalism, in the moral economy which informs the passion in his exposition, the simplistic ethical discourse of Sunday School Christianity and in the accretion of centuries of suspicion and hatred towards Jews emanating from those traditions that we find the reasons for Anstey's anti-Semitism.<sup>29</sup>

### Zionism in Australia

As muscular Judaism was linked to political Zionism in Europe, it is important to consider the state of Zionism in Australia during this period. Zionism was weaker in Australia than in any other western nation and Australia was not represented at the Zionist congresses. This was noted by Theodor Herzl who published a letter in the *Hebrew Standard* in April 1901 where he appealed to Australian Jews 'not to forget their brothers', and 'to contribute to the Jewish Colonial Bank and to send delegates to the congresses'.<sup>30</sup>

In the late nineteenth century there had been some marginal interest in the Zionist ideal in Australia. The first Zionist society in Australia was formed in Perth by the Rabbi D I Freedman. Honig noted that Freedman's Zionism, like that of many in Australia, was devoid of any ideology. Other societies were later set up in Melbourne and Sydney.<sup>31</sup> Recent research has unearthed correspondence between

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<sup>28</sup> A Moore, *The Right Road, A History of Right Wing Politics in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Sydney, 1995, p. 20.

<sup>29</sup> P Love, 'The Kingdom of Shylock: A Case Study of Australian Labour Anti-Semitism', *Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society*, vol. XII, no. 1, 1993, p. 61.

<sup>30</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 26 April 1901.

<sup>31</sup> E Honig, *Zionism in Australia*, p. 17.

the World International Zionist Organisation (WIZO) and various groups and individuals in Australia. Dating from 1894, material has also been uncovered in the files of the Jewish National Fund (JNF) and the Jewish Agency files, held at the Central Zionist Archives. Much of the correspondence before 1920 seems to be linked to fund raising for the Zionist cause. It appears Australian Jews were willing to contribute financially but were wary of any ideological campaign at this time.<sup>32</sup>

The Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917 stated that the British government 'viewed with favour' the establishment of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine.<sup>33</sup> Britain occupied Palestine in October 1918 and was granted a mandate over the territory, which was ratified by the League of Nations in July 1922. It was left to British foreign policy to satisfy the 'conflicting national obligations of Arabs and Jews'.<sup>34</sup> However, British acceptance of the Zionist principle did not lead to an embracing of Zionism by Australian Jewry. It was not until the 1920s, after the visits of Israel Cohen (secretary of the Zionist Organisation in London) and Israel Brodie, another Zionist envoy, that political Zionism made inroads in Australia and led to public debates amongst community leaders and intellectuals. In 1927 a central body, the Zionist Federation of Australia was set up. Honig noted that there were 'few full-time Jews' in the community and there were no professional workers to serve Zionist organisations. Despite immigration and the work of Zionist emissaries to Australia, control in the community remained in the hands of the Anglo-Australian Jewry. Australian Jews accepted Zionism conditionally. In Australia, Honig explained that:

the central purpose of Zionism, as seen by the Zionists themselves, and as perceived by the general Jewish community, became the raising of funds ... most of the productive fund raising was carried out within the Palestine Welfare League, which continued to promote a quiet and non-political form of Zionism

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<sup>32</sup> A D Crown and J Shipp, *Early Australian Zionism: An annotated index of records in the central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem, Part Two 1901-1970*, Archive of Australian Judaica, University of Sydney, 2000, pp. 1-3.

<sup>33</sup> M Gilbert, *A History of the Twentieth Century, Volume One: 1900-1933*, Harper Collins Publishers, London, 1997, p. 474.

<sup>34</sup> M Gilbert, *A History of the Twentieth Century*, p. 548.

that focussed on support for the JNF, and education in wider circles on the meaning of Zionism.<sup>35</sup>

It is clear that in the general Australian Jewish community Zionism had a low priority, though Jews contributed to various Jewish 'worthy causes' even if they were coordinated by Zionist groups. This is entirely in conformity with the notion of communal non-distinctiveness.

### **Sport and the Jewish community**

Many have claimed that organised sport was part of the Jewish community from the 1880s,<sup>36</sup> though there is no evidence to support this view. Brian Kino, historian of the Jewish interstate sporting carnivals in Australia, claimed that six Jewish sporting organisations existed in 1912: the Young People's Hebrew Association (YPHA), the Sydney Judean Amateur Athletic Association (SJAA), the Maccabean Social and Sports Club (MSSC), the Bankstown Judean Tennis Club (BJTC), Jewish Social and Sports Club (JSSC) and the Jewish Amateur Athletic Club (JAAC). He stated that these clubs operated with varying degrees of success, though their activities were limited to athletics, tennis, swimming and cricket.<sup>37</sup> However, Kino provides no evidence of the existence of these clubs so early in the century. It was in the early 1920s that Jewish sport became prominent and numerous sporting clubs and organisations to govern sport were established in Sydney and around the country. The opening of the Jewish War Memorial Hall, otherwise known as the Maccabean Hall, in Darlinghurst on Armistice Day (11 November) 1923 was a starting point for Jewish sport.

The construction of a war memorial confirmed the community's loyalty to the Empire and symbolised its contribution to the war effort. The names of 828 Sydney Jews who volunteered for active service were listed (113 were killed in action). The official opening was performed by Lieutenant-General John Monash, Australia's

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<sup>35</sup> E Honig, *Zionism in Australia*, p. 35.

<sup>36</sup> For example, M Swibel 'A History of Australian Jewish Sport', *Hakoah Star*, vol. 5. no. 7, 1981. Swibel claims that this included the Perth community. This is highly unlikely as the entire Western Australian Jewish community numbered just 27 in 1881. These errors are repeated in many Jewish popular sporting and community magazines. As I demonstrate elsewhere in this chapter it was not until the 1920s that tentative moves were begun to establish sporting activity for Perth Jewry.



most revered Jew, who had commanded the Australian Corps during World War I. Monash was quick to rebuke those who had questioned the construction of a utilitarian building as a memorial. He noted that it was built on the lines of the Jewish War Memorial in Britain in that it had:

... the aim of keeping the Jewish people together, preserving their creed, perpetuating their faith. It is to prevent the regrettable drift that is making many of our people cease from owing allegiance to the religion of their fathers.<sup>38</sup>

The utilitarian nature of the memorial pointed to a realisation that action needed to be taken to heighten awareness of community members of their own Jewishness. Sport was also a means of mobilising Jewish youth considered as vital to the community's survival in the 1920s. This survival was threatened by high rates of intermarriage, a major concern to the community at this time. Rutland stated:

The limitations of the synagogue were realised by communal leaders who believed that the establishment of communal centres and the fostering of sporting and social activities for young people would provide a rallying point for the unaffiliated and so help reduce the rising intermarriage rates.<sup>39</sup>

The opening of the Maccabean Hall sparked a flurry of Jewish sporting activity in Sydney. A 'monster sports picnic' was advertised for January 1924, to be held at Lane Cove. The press reported that:

a combined sports picnic is being held on Sunday 20 January and the outing promises to be a huge success. Never in the history of Sydney Jewry has such a similar event been held. The majority of athletic clubs will be competing and some very keen contests should be witnessed.<sup>40</sup>

The *Hebrew Standard* reported on a meeting held to organise the picnic. It was attended by delegates from YPHA, the Maccabean social Athletic Club (MSAC), BJTC, JAAC and SJSC, clubs which Kino claims to have been in existence since

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<sup>37</sup> B Kino, *The Carnivals*, 1-3.

<sup>38</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 16 November 1923.

<sup>39</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, p. 154.

<sup>40</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 4 January 1924.

1912. However, Rutland has stated that the YPHA was formed in 1915, but it is unknown if it fostered sporting activities.<sup>41</sup> It appears that the MSAC, also known as the Maccabean Institute, was formed in 1922. The *Hebrew Standard* made reference to MSAC's second annual dinner in March 1924 at Harris Hall,<sup>42</sup> though oddly the same newspaper noted MSAC held a dinner where it celebrated its 'successful first year'.<sup>43</sup> Another important club, the Randwick Coogee Social Club (RCSC) was formed in 1922, and from 1923 it organised various sporting teams. While the chronology of Jewish sports clubs is confusing, there was clearly more activity in the 1920s.

For the mass sports carnival the committee decided on a conventional track and field program with the addition of throwing the cricket ball and tug o' war. There were also events for women, restricted to a 50 yards championship and a 75 yards relay.<sup>44</sup> If sport was going to work against intermarriage then it would need to cater for women. One of the men on the carnival committee was Issy Brodsky, who with his brother Alex, was to play a crucial role in community sport. The brothers were also heavily involved with the Sydney University Athletics Club (SUAC).<sup>45</sup>

The *Hebrew Standard*, labelled the picnic 'The Carnival of Happiness', and reported with corny enthusiasm:

Go in the Macs, the Mac!

Gorn the waybacks, the waybacks. The Y.P.s to win The Y.P.H.A.! HORRAY, HORRAY! And hundreds of shrill voices filled the summer air. Hundreds of hearts throbbed with excitement and enthusiasm. Yes! there were hundreds of them: boys of all ages — fast boys and slow boys; girls — pretty, buxom, cajoling girls — from flappers — well! back to flappers again.

Happiness was the keynote of the whole affair, and youth unrestrained scooped it to hearts full. The combined sports meeting that was held at The Avenue, Lane Cove last Sunday will long remain a happy and pleasant memory to young Jewry. Not only because of its wonderful success but because of its excellent

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<sup>41</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, p. 155.

<sup>42</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 11 January 1924.

<sup>43</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 24 April 1924.

<sup>44</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 11 January 1924.

<sup>45</sup> Issy Brodsky became a well known surgeon, academic and historian. He published many books on medical and historic subjects including seven on various aspects of the history of Sydney.

achievement in defiantly establishing a new spirit and ideal of Sydney's Jewish youth — the ideal that must ultimately culminate in the "One big Club" scheme.<sup>46</sup>

This was followed by a successful swimming carnival in February 1924. Such events added momentum to the movement to promote Jewish sport. The Maccabean Institute and later the Maccabean Sports Association (MSA), was the controlling body. The 'Mac' set the agenda for Jewish sport in Sydney for the next fifteen years until its monopoly was broken in the late 1930s, partly by the arrival of German and Austrian refugees and the establishment of the Hakoah Club.

Was this new enthusiasm related to muscular Judaism? George Eisen noted a change in the mindset of Jews in the early twentieth century that allowed them to contemplate activities such as sport:

As an unforced marriage of ideologies, the emergence of modern sport movements and the Jewish community came together at a fortuitous moment in history.

Although this notion might conflict with entrenched Jewish sensibilities, Jewish communities everywhere responded to the call for modern sport and the Olympic movement with unbridled enthusiasm.<sup>47</sup>

In Australia, Jews had lived as Australians of a different faith rather than as a separate community. While introducing sport as a communal activity was seen as desirable by community leaders, it is doubtful that they were influenced directly by muscular Judaism. Although there is no concrete evidence, it is likely that some Sydney Jews were aware of Nordau's ideas and that sport had been adopted by Jews around the world. The weakness of the Zionist movement in Australia makes it more likely that Australian Jewry began to organise community sport because sport was part of the Australian way of life. Sydney Jewish sport in the 1920s did not display the type of aggressive behaviour described by Bill Murray in his discussion of Hakoah Vienna: 'Hakoah's athletes lived up to their name as they deliberately set

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<sup>46</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 25 January 1924.

<sup>47</sup> G Eisen, 'Jewish History and Sport', *Journal of Sport History*, vol. 25, no. 3, Fall 1998, p. 520.

out to upset anti-Semitic stereotypes, with a physical style that resulted in many free-for-alls'.<sup>48</sup> This kind of behaviour would have been unthinkable to Sydney Jewry.

Jewish sportsmen and women competed in mainstream sporting events, often with outstanding results. Myer Rosenblum was a champion rugby union player and hammer thrower. In rugby he represented Sydney University, St George, Western Suburbs and New South Wales and played four test matches for Australia. He also competed successfully in the hammer throw for SUAC and New South Wales. He represented Australia in the hammer throw at the 1938 British Empire Games in Sydney. Rosenblum also took an interest in Jewish community sport where he competed in tennis and athletics. He was foundation treasurer of the MSAC and his law firm later acted as solicitor for various Jewish sporting organisations in the city.<sup>49</sup> In 1926 Rosenblum became the first life member of the MSAC.

Lionel Van Praag was an outstanding motor cycle racer. He began racing in Sydney in the 1920s and held the world 400m speed record (around a speedway track). He became a professional speedway racer in England in 1931. Van Praag was the winner of the inaugural world speedway championship when the event was staged at Wembley Stadium in 1936.<sup>50</sup> In the 1920s he had played rugby league for the Maccabean Institute. Issy Sender and Alex Owen played rugby league for the Sydney University Rugby League Club (SURL) in the days when the club played in the New South Wales premiership (1920-1937). Roy Levy was an outstanding cricketer who played for Waverley and who took part in the first interstate Jewish cricket match between New South Wales and Victoria in 1924. He later moved to Queensland where he played Sheffield Shield cricket, captaining his adopted state from 1933 to 1936. He played 25 first class matches and was later a state selector. He also represented New South Wales, Queensland and Australia at baseball.<sup>51</sup> Alec Marks was an outstanding cricketer who played 35 first class matches for New

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<sup>48</sup> W Murray, *Football: A History of the World Game*, p. 103.

<sup>49</sup> Myer Rosenblum, Interview, 1997.

<sup>50</sup> W Vamplew, et al (eds.) *The Oxford Companion to Australian Sport*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne 1997, p. 441.

<sup>51</sup> R Cashman et al (eds.), *The A - Z of Australian Cricketers*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne 1997, p. 171.

South Wales between 1928 and 1937. Marks also represented New South Wales at rugby union.<sup>52</sup>

Perhaps the most notable Jewish sporting personality was Ernest Samuel Marks whose career reflected perfectly the notion of the non-distinctive Jew. While he took a great interest in Jewish affairs, he was most prominent in the wider community. Marks served on the Sydney Municipal Council from 1920 to 1927 and 1930 to 1947. He was Sydney's first Jewish Lord Mayor in 1930 and he represented North Sydney in the New South Wales Parliament from 1927 to 1930.<sup>53</sup> As a youth he competed successfully in athletics as a runner over a number of distances. He became one of the most influential men in Australian sport in the first half of the twentieth century. Marks was a founding member of the New South Wales Amateur Athletics Association (NSWAAA) and the Amateur Athletic Union of Australasia (AAUA). He was also involved in the organisation of a number of other amateur sports such as swimming, wrestling and boxing. In the international sphere he represented Australia at the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) and managed Australian Olympic teams in 1908, 1912 and 1932 where he served as an official. Importantly, he was a founding member of the New South Wales Sports Club and its chairman from 1904 to 1926.<sup>54</sup> He was also the person most responsible for the construction of the Sydney Athletic Field in Moore Park that bears his name. Marks was one of only two Australians to receive the veteran's badge awarded by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for services to amateur sport, awarded to him at the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1932.<sup>55</sup> He became a director of the New South Wales Rugby League (NSWRL) in the 1930s, ironically taking his place beside James Joynton Smith, the proprietor of the anti-

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<sup>52</sup> R Cashman, et al (eds.), *The Oxford Companion to Australian Cricket*, Oxford University press, Melbourne 1996, pp. 329-330.

<sup>53</sup> B Nairn and G Serle (eds.), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 10, 1891-1939, Melbourne University Press, pp. 413-414.

<sup>54</sup> The New South Wales Sports Club, the significance of which in Australian sport has largely been forgotten, was the central business office and de facto headquarters for most amateur sport in Australia until the 1930s. Many sporting clubs and organisations sought affiliation with it, thus gaining use of its rooms for meetings, occasions, socialising and a reliable postal address. See M A Daly, *One Hundred Years of Australian Sport: A History of The New South Wales Sports Club*, NSWSC, Sydney, 1996.

<sup>55</sup> S B Glass, 'Ernest Samuel Marks', *Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society*, vol. iii, part 3, December 1947, pp. 454-456.

Semitic *Smith's Weekly*.<sup>56</sup> Marks was listed in the *Hebrew Standard* as one of the guests of honour at the opening of the Jewish War Memorial Hall and he played a role in the formative years of Jewish sport through his involvement with the MSAC. He was president of the club in its second season, and at the third annual dinner in April 1925 'exhorted every athlete to be a sport on the field and moreover be a credit to Jewry always'.<sup>57</sup> The presidency was taken over by Norman Shureck and Marks' name disappeared from the records of Jewish sport.<sup>58</sup>

While some Jewish clubs, notably in inter-club athletics, occasionally competed outside the community, Jewish sports leaders preferred intramural competitions and interstate sporting carnivals, so that sport was played within the community. They believed that sport could reinvigorate the community. We can recognise elements of muscular Judaism in the philosophy of sport in the Australian Jewish community. Adopting the name Maccabean implies a familiarity with trends in Jewish sport in Europe. However, it is a much watered-down variety of muscular Judaism and devoid of any commitment to Zionism.

During the 1920s the *Hebrew Standard* reported activity in cricket, athletics, tennis and swimming. A baseball match was conducted at Lane Cove in April 1924 between past and present members of the YPHA. Billiards and table tennis also became popular, and there were many state and national table tennis champions. Despite the range of sporting activity there was no official coordinating body for sport. The degree of sporting activity prompted moves for a peak body to oversee and organise sport. The *Hebrew Standard* stated:

A move is afoot to thoroughly organise Jewish sport. It is mooted that a business-like association be formed affiliating all the Jewish clubs. The scheme, if successful will fill a long deserved craving. Jewish sport has to be lifted up and it can only be done by conducting matters on a proper footing.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> C Cunneen, 'James Joynton Smith', M McKernan (ed.), *The Makers of Australian Sporting Traditions*, Melbourne University Press, 1993, pp. 226-229. Smith was president of the New South Wales Rugby League from 1910-1928 and its patron from 1928-1943.

<sup>57</sup> E S Marks, address to Maccabean Amateur Athletic Club Annual Dinner, 16 April 1925, *Hebrew Standard*, 24 April 1925.

<sup>58</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 23 April 1926.

<sup>59</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 18 April 1924.

The Maccabean Sports Committee (MSC) was established in 1925 with Rupert Michaelis<sup>60</sup> as chairman and Alec Brodsky as secretary. Its objectives were set out as follows:

Control of Jewish sport within the state of New South Wales; Arrangements of interstate visits; All sports will come under its jurisdiction; There shall be 25 members to constitute the committee and the personnel of the committee will comprise representatives of each section; Representatives will be drawn as follows: athletics (6), cricket (6), gymnasium (5), tennis (4), swimming (4).<sup>61</sup>

Although sport governance became centralised, the Maccabean Hall struggled financially because of a debt of £10 000. The first annual report noted:

... there is a liability to the Commonwealth Bank of £10 000 advanced as part of the cost of erecting the building. The terms of repayment are spread over a period of twenty years in equal amounts of £850 per annum ... this heavy burden is more than the Institution can bear and no effort should be spared by the community during the current year to extinguish the debt entirely ... members subscriptions, the chief source of revenue have fallen short of expectations ... hire of the hall contributed £718 ... an improvement maybe reasonably anticipated ... the patronage of the Jewish community in observing domestic celebrations is inexplicably disappointing ... the treasurer would be grateful for the receipt of donations promised some years ago which total approximately £500.<sup>62</sup>

The Maccabean Institute launched a recruitment drive with the slogan 'Every Jew a Member', hoping to attract 1 000 members. A 'membership barometer' was published each week listing members by suburb. The barometer for mid-August

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<sup>60</sup> Rupert Michaelis was an all round sportsman and sports administrator. He was a surf life saver, cricketer, tennis player, lawn bowler and golfer. In 1952 he served on the foundation committee of the Monash Country Club, Sydney's Jewish golf club. See C Tatz, *A Course of History*.

<sup>61</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 7 August 1925. The organisation was constantly refereed to as the 'Maccabean Sports Union' or the 'Sports Union' in Jewish publications. However the *Annual Report of the Maccabean Institute 1932-1933* stated that 'the Maccabean Sports Association came into existence during the latter part of 1932'. Previously it was known as the Maccabean Sports Committee.

1926 showed membership had reached 955, just short of the target (see table 3.2).<sup>63</sup> The table confirms the largest concentration of members was in the city and eastern suburbs. Jewish sporting teams were mostly located in Sydney's eastern suburbs.

Table 3.2 Maccabean Institute Membership by District, August 1926.

Maccabean Institute Membership Barometer, August 1926.			
Bondi	117	Marrickville	21
City	80	Stanmore	14
Waverley	65	Elizabeth Bay	16
Paddington	62	Kensington	14
Potts Point	52	Rose Bay	14
Bellevue Hill	52	Hurlston Park	14
Randwick	51	Darling Point	13
North Sydney	43	Leichhardt	10
Redfern	38	Newtown	10
Darlinghurst	39	Botany	10
Centennial Park	38	Ashfield	10
Coogee	32	Double Bay	10
Woollahra	30	Suburbs under 10 and rural	100
		Total	955

The eighth annual report of the Institute in 1929 noted that the finance committee remained concerned about the financial position. It forecast future deficits 'unless far greater support is given to the Institute by members and the community generally'. It stated that the 'council views with regret the tendency on the part of members and non-members to hold their functions — weddings, etc in outside premises.'<sup>64</sup> The Institute launched its journal *The Maccabean* in 1929. After one year, the final issue appeared on 3 January 1930. The editor stated that the '*Maccabean* would not have gone under had it not been for the indifference from within our own ranks. Quite possibly our circulation of 1 800 did not offer a good

<sup>62</sup> *New South Wales Jewish War Memorial Annual Report, 1925.*

<sup>63</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 14 August 1945.

<sup>64</sup> *The Maccabean*, 12 April 1929.



enough field for Jewish advertisers'.<sup>65</sup> In subsequent years the Institute summarised its activities, including sport, in its *Maccabean Annual*. In the 1930s the MSU was a strong organisation. 'All sporting sections and activities of the Maccabean Institute are conducted under the supervision of the Association'.<sup>66</sup>

### **The Jewish rugby league competition**

The earliest mention of the formation of a Jewish rugby league (JRL) competition occurred on 18 April 1924, a mere five months after the opening of the Maccabean Hall. The notice, under the heading 'Football', read:

Institute members desirous of playing under the 'Rugby League' code are invited to attend a meeting at the Hall next Sunday evening at 7 p.m. to discuss the formation of a Football section.<sup>67</sup>

It is clear from this that the peak body to control sport had now been formed — the JRL competition would be a 'section' of an overall sporting body. The enthusiasm of the organisers was not wasted. On 4 May 1924 the first rugby league match between Jewish teams took place at Moore Park. It was a friendly played between MSAC and YPHA, won by the latter by 21-0. The success of this match resulted in a competition begun on 18 May. It consisted of four teams and the event was hailed in the Jewish press:

Jewish sporting history was made last Sunday when the interclub football competition made a sensational beginning. It was an echo of the great athletic meeting of last January and the greater swimming carnival of February, only the echo was louder and more thrilling. Play throughout was brilliant and was a delightful treat to spectators while the results of both matches were remarkable.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> *The Maccabean*, 3 January 1930.

<sup>66</sup> *Maccabean Annual 1933*, pp. 23-27. This edition listed the following affiliated sporting organisations: Maccabean Gymnasium, Sydney Judean Cricket Association, Maccabean Amateur Athletic Club, Maccabean Cricket Club, Returned Soldiers Cricket Club, Maccabean Soccer Club, Tennis, Swimming, Billiards and Snooker, Table Tennis and the Sydney Judean Soccer League.

<sup>67</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 18 April 1924.

<sup>68</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 6 June 1924.

The *Hebrew Standard* provided very detailed weekly accounts of the rugby league matches and attempted to build some of the players up as 'stars' within the community. There was also an emphasis on the 'manliness' of the game, a unique feature of the reporting on Jewish sport in this era. The competition was an intramural one which pitted one Jewish club against another rather than competing in district leagues. Great emphasis was placed on post-match activity at the Maccabean Hall and the competition was promoted as a spectacle to attract spectators and so widen social interaction.

The prime mover behind the establishment of the JRL competition was Alec Brodsky. He was assisted by L J Toffler, general secretary of the MSA. Brodsky remained at the helm throughout the 1924 season as well as playing for the Maccabean Institute team which won the inaugural competition. By all accounts Brodsky was a brilliant secretary and it was the League's loss when he stepped down from this post at the end of this first season. His position was taken over by his brother Isadore. Alec Brodsky continued to play rugby league but it seems his administrative interests focussed more on the interstate carnivals and athletics and cricket.

At the end of the 1924 season a 'Possibles' versus 'Probables' game was played to select a team to play against the Jewish undergraduates of the Sydney University. 'Segok' reported:

The men from the different faculties didn't seem to mix well. In the front row alone, there were two dashing medicos, a gentle student of arts, an argumentative law student and a rotund greaser the last two of whom used their weight effectively.<sup>69</sup>

In the following season the Jewish students entered a team in the regular competition but were a big disappointment to the organisers, emphasising the difficulty of fielding weekly rugby league teams from a small base. There were just over twenty Jewish undergraduates at the University of Sydney in the mid-1920s.<sup>70</sup>

Despite some early difficulties and doubts about the makeup of the league the 1925 competition began on 31 May. Two new teams appeared in RCSC and Sydney

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<sup>69</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 25 July 1924.

<sup>70</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 22 April 1927.

University. Maccabean Institute and Judeans remained from 1924. Prior to the commencement of the competition 'Wing Forward' reported:

Keen Jewish footballers are like good diamonds. Hard to find. This sentence aptly sums up the position. Although a blackboard lecture was announced in these columns in the previous issue only four enthusiasts in the persons of Messrs Kline, Sender, and the Brodsky twins were present. That efficient referee Mr G Wirth who so ably officiated last year strongly depreciated the apathetic attitude of our footballers and expresses the hope that players will turn out early on Sunday morning when he will deliver a short address on the fundamental principles of the game.<sup>71</sup>

However, there were problems maintaining the competition. The premiers could field only eleven players for their first match yet defeated RCSC by 11-2. As the weeks passed clubs began to have trouble fielding full sides and games often did not start on time due to players turning up late. On 21 June 1925 a low point was reached when only sixteen players representing four clubs bothered to turn up in wet conditions.<sup>72</sup>

Under these circumstances the league was always going to struggle for survival. Nevertheless, the board was able to see the competition finished. Once again a Possibles versus Probables game was held in order to give the better players a representative fixture. However, many of the selected players could not take part because the fixture clashed with the Maccabi tennis tournament, again highlighting the problem of lack of numbers to sustain a viable community league.<sup>73</sup>

When the new season began on 23 May 1926 it became clear that the JRL was in trouble. Only three clubs entered the competition, fielding depleted teams. Harris Hall could only manage to field seven players while the Institute fielded ten.

The growing popularity of soccer among Jewish young men may have made it more difficult for rugby league to continue. For the return match with Institute on 13 June, Harris Hall failed to appear and at the conclusion of the competition on 27 June the

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<sup>71</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 15 May 1925.

<sup>72</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 26 June 1925.

<sup>73</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 24 July 1925.

majority of the matches had been played with teams short.<sup>74</sup> 'Wing Forward' lamented that the JRL could have been a success if players had always attended and 'Javelin' commented that although the standard of football had improved over three years 'footballers continue to exhibit what appears to be a characteristic trait of apathy'. Nevertheless, with characteristic optimism the JRL looked forward to a season 'replete with thrills' in 1927.<sup>75</sup>

The JRL board approached the 1927 with the usual enthusiasm and received backing from the Jewish press with articles on the rules, prominent players, player fitness as well as the usual entreaties to players to support the competition now known as the Lieberman Cup competition. The teams expected to compete were Maccabean Institute, Judeans, RCSC and the Undergrads. Turnout to practice was small.<sup>76</sup> Pleas were made to players to attend and to be punctual, details of the best public transport to the ground were published, but everything failed. When the practice matches failed to draw players a match was played against the Evening News XIII by a Combined Jewish team and won by 18-11. Finally the JRL board gave up and the competition was abandoned.<sup>77</sup>

For the remainder of the winter of 1927 the Institute team organised social games, mostly against local non-Jewish opposition. In all they played three games against the Evening News XIII, three against Fosseys and one against the much maligned Undergrads. This arrangement was considered unsatisfactory by the *Hebrew Standard*:

This year after a flourish of trumpets that seemed likely to rekindle the old flame, the competition, which proved an undernourished baby compared to previous ones succumbed early. Matches against outside bodies were substituted, but apart from the desire to win, all other aspects were conspicuous by their absence.<sup>78</sup>

Organisers of the JRL had made a valiant attempt to promote the code within the Jewish community. It had actively tried to impress on Jewish young men the inherent toughness of the code. It tried to achieve this within the framework of the developing

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<sup>74</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 8 June 1926.

<sup>75</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 2 July 1926.

<sup>76</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 22 April 1927.

<sup>77</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 20 May 1927.

Jewish sports movement in Sydney. The Brodskys and others endeavoured to promote rugby league as the flagship sport of the new sports movement, with occasional jousts through representative games against non-Jewish opposition.

From the middle of 1927 soccer received extensive coverage in *The Hebrew Standard*. By the end of the 1920s it was the flagship winter sport of the community. The JRL failed due to lack of numbers. The physical nature of the game may have been a factor in that clubs with barely enough players to field a team could not afford injuries. At times the *Hebrew Standard* questioned the 'manliness' of those who failed to turn up for games. Sid Einfeld stated that 'the players simply grew older and nobody emerged to take their place'.<sup>79</sup>

The influence of European immigrants in the mid-1920s may have increased soccer's popularity in the community at the expense of rugby league. The promotion of Jewish rugby league probably reflects the successful assimilation of that generation to Australian society and a resultant desire to play Australian games. Its containment within the boundaries of Jewish sport sponsored by the Maccabean Hall sat easily with the views of the hierarchy and Sid Einfeld stated that 'the playing of rugby league could not directly stop marrying out but it contributed via socialising during and after matches'.<sup>80</sup>

### **The Maccabean sporting carnivals**

While sport had been developing in the Sydney Jewish community, similar developments were taking place in Melbourne and Perth. Kino claimed that during the early 1920s the Judean League of Victoria (JLV) and its affiliates such as the Jewish Young Peoples Association (JYPA) conducted twelve sports. In mid-May 1924 a peak body for sport known as the Associated Judean Athletic Clubs (AJAC or AJAX) was formed in Melbourne and affiliated with the JLV.

A Maccabean Club was formed in Perth in May 1920 'for eligible Jewish young men',<sup>81</sup> though little is known of its activities. Concern was voiced in the *Jewish Observer* in November 1920 that in the:

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<sup>78</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 19 August 1927.

<sup>79</sup> Sid Einfeld, Interview, 1995.

<sup>80</sup> Sid Einfeld, Interview, 1995.

<sup>81</sup> *The Jewish Observer*, vol. 2, no. 3, May 1920.

Perth Hebrew Congregation no thought has been given to educate in that which is equally important in the curriculum, namely athletic and healthful games. This neglect forces our young people to join clubs and societies of outside denominations ... it tends to break the social and communal ties that the congregation should do well to foster.<sup>82</sup>

The Perth Jewish Tennis Club was formed in May 1924 and the Western Australian Zionist Athletic Club (WAZAC) was formed later that year. WAZAC later expanded its activities to include boxing, gymnastics, cricket, soccer, athletics, and for a short period cycling and debating.

Kino described how the first Australian Jewish interstate sporting contact came about:

Leo Levy, secretary of the SJAAA (which field a cricket team) who persuaded his committee to write to Rabbi Israel Brodie in Melbourne inquiring whether there was a cricket team there and if so whether a game was possible against a Sydney side. The rabbi passed this letter on to sports authorities and after considerable discussion it was agreed that SJAAA would travel to Melbourne at Christmas 1924. In August 1924, Maurice Ashkanazi, the powerful head of the JLV stepped in and ordered the AJAC to cease negotiating, his reasoning being that if interstate contests were to be held then the senior Victorian sports organisation should deal with the Maccabean Institute Sports Union, who the JVC recognised as the controller of New South Wales Jewish sport.<sup>83</sup>

After the AJAC liaised with the Maccabean Hall in Sydney an interstate sporting trip was organised. However, discussion of the possibility of interstate sport had appeared in the *Hebrew Standard* as early as 14 March 1924. 'Segok', stated that:

A great scheme is being evolved in the mind of the more active members of Sydney's young Jewry, and making allowance for inevitable obstacles, the scheme should culminate, by the beginning of next summer, in interstate meetings, both in the fields of sport and learning between Sydney and Melbourne

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<sup>82</sup> *The Jewish Observer*, vol. 2, no. 8, November 1920.

Jewish Clubs. The N.S.W. [sic] Memorial Hall has made such a glorious scheme possible and a great deal depends on the future action of the executive, more particularly, the social and sporting sections. It would be a great achievement in that it would strengthen the tie of understanding, so necessary between Jews in scattered parts of Australia.<sup>84</sup>

'Segok' outlined plans to send cricket, swimming, athletics, debating, orchestral and dramatic teams to Melbourne. The New South Wales cricket team, selected after a series of trial games, travelled to Melbourne by train at Christmas 1924. The team was treated to a round of receptions and were officially welcomed by Dr D Rosenberg, president of JLV and by Rabbi Brodie at the Bourke Street Synagogue. Victoria won the inaugural contest by eight wickets. It is ironic that it was sport, so often ignored by scholars of Australian Jewry, that brought Sydney and Melbourne Jews together for the first time. Dr Rosenberg used the opportunity to stress the importance of sport as 'a bulwark against assimilation':

The recent visit of the Jewish young men to this city marks an event in Australian Jewish life. Would that we seniors would take a lesson and show that Jews are one, that Melbourne and Sydney Jewry are quite close together and that miles mean nothing. Even more than that, all the Australian Jews should be federated under a federal organisation ... these interstate visits are so necessary to the welfare of the Jewish youth — as any institution — be it educational, social or communal — for the preservation of our individuality and a bulwark against assimilation.<sup>85</sup>

While the December 1924 interstate cricket game was the first Jewish interstate sporting contest, it was the visit of Victorian sporting teams to Sydney from 25 December 1925 to 3 January 1926 that marked the first interstate sporting carnival. Since then, there has been a continuous series (apart from an interval during World War II) that later became known as the Australian Maccabi Games. The Maccabean Sports Institute coordinated the event in Sydney. It expanded the interstate concept to also include athletics, swimming and tennis. Victoria sent a team of eighteen sportsmen to contest four sports. Bill Stafford of Victoria and Myer Rosenblum of

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<sup>83</sup> B Kino, *The Carnivals*, p. 1.

<sup>84</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 14 March 1924.

<sup>85</sup> D Rosenberg, letter to the editor, *Hebrew Standard*, 8 January 1925.

New South Wales each represented in three sports. New South Wales reversed the previous year's cricket result by defeating Victoria by 333 runs, Roy Levy scored 146 not out and 103 not out.<sup>86</sup>

In January 1926 the JLV met and decided to recognise the Maccabean Institute of New South Wales as a kindred body representing the intellectual, social and athletic life of the New South Wales Jewish community. The JLV also decided that New South Wales visitors to Victoria would have membership rights of the JLV and it recognised the agreement between the two controlling bodies that provided for an annual sporting contest shared alternately in Sydney and Melbourne.<sup>87</sup>

The wording of this agreement caused problems in the leadup to the second Jewish sporting carnival in Melbourne in 1926/27. When it was mooted in July 1926 that Perth would send a cricket team to Melbourne to compete in the carnival, there was concern in Melbourne because of additional accommodation costs.<sup>88</sup> The Maccabean Institute in Sydney also opposed the extension of the carnivals to other states. The Victorians invited Perth anyway, who then sent a full squad to compete in all sports.

In 1927/28 carnival events were split between Perth and Sydney. Perth staged its first carnival in its own right in 1929/30. The carnivals were staged annually until 1938/39. They were considered an important part of the rejuvenation of Australian Jewry in this period.<sup>89</sup>

### **The Judean Soccer League**

Early in 1927 there were references to soccer clubs in the Jewish press. RCSC was one of the first clubs to advertise for players in two codes of football (rugby league and soccer).<sup>90</sup> Because of a limited number of Jewish players, it was not possible for the community to support two football codes. In May, the Maccabean Institute formed a soccer club, named Maccabean Junior Soccer Club (MJSC), to compete

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<sup>86</sup> B Kino, *The Carnivals*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>87</sup> B Kino, *The Carnivals*, p. 13.

<sup>88</sup> *Australian Jewish Gazette*, 8 July and 15 July 1926.

<sup>89</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*.

<sup>90</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 15 April 1927.



against kindred clubs.<sup>91</sup> Shortly afterwards the first official soccer match was played between MJSC and RCSC resulting in a 5-0 win for Maccabean. The *Hebrew Standard* stated that the match 'evinced unusual interest'.<sup>92</sup> Throughout June, the Jewish press reported an increased interest in the code.

It was evident that soccer was preferred to rugby league by late June: while 'torrential rain necessitated the postponement of the rugby league match set down' ... and 'only some of the players turned up', the weather failed to stop the MJSC soccer match on the same day at Bondi.<sup>93</sup> Jewish soccer clubs occasionally played matches against non-Jewish clubs such as Bondi Beach, Daceyville Rovers and Waterview Rovers. The demand for soccer in the Jewish community led to the foundation of the Sydney Judean Soccer League (SJSJL). The *Hebrew Standard* reported that:

Representatives of the various soccer clubs indicated the extent of their keenness and enterprise, at the delegates meeting which was held on Sunday evening ... arrangements were consummated to conduct inter-club soccer competition under the auspices of a body to be known as the Sydney Judean Soccer League. Three teams have signified their intention of participating, the MJSC, RCSC and Jewish AC (JAC formally JAAA).<sup>94</sup>

After this meeting soccer came under the control of the Maccabean Hall, ensuring that it conformed to the prevailing ethos of Jewish sport in the city. Having decided to establish a Jewish soccer competition, the SJSJL appealed to the public for the donation of a suitable trophy. In early August it was announced that because of the demise of the JRL competition the M A Lieberman Cup — which was the JRL trophy — would be awarded to the winners of the soccer competition.<sup>95</sup> MJSC subsequently won the Lieberman Cup for soccer, emulating the achievement of the club's rugby league team in 1924.

The soccer competition gained popularity in 1928 and by 1929 it was well established as the main winter sport. The MJSC club decided to omit the word

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<sup>91</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 20 May 1927.

<sup>92</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 27 May 1927.

<sup>93</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 1 July, 1927.

<sup>94</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 15 July 1927.

'Junior' from its title, to become known as Maccabean Soccer club.<sup>96</sup> With the addition of two new clubs Bankstown Jewish Club and Balmain Waratahs, and one dropping out in 1929, the competition consisted of four clubs. Unlike the JRL, which was based entirely in the eastern suburbs, the SJSL tapped into suburbs to the west of the city.

There were two events of great significance for Jewish sport in the city in the winter of 1929, which involved the SJSL in the winter of 1929. One was the beginning of negotiations for, and the eventual staging of, an interstate soccer fixture with Melbourne Hakoah. The second was the eviction of the SJSL from the Moore Park playing fields.

Melbourne Hakoah Soccer Club was formed in 1928 by prominent Melbourne solicitor Josef Shatin and the Skolnik brothers, leading wine and spirit merchants. A steady stream of immigrants arriving in Melbourne provided the impetus for the club.<sup>97</sup> Melbourne Hakoah was not a community club, but a club formed by businessmen and soccer lovers who believed that this venture would provide an appropriate sport for the new arrivals. At the club's first meeting it was decided to name the football club Hakoah, probably because of the success of Hakoah Vienna'.<sup>98</sup> From the mid-1920s many Jewish soccer and sports clubs around the world adopted the title Hakoah, though not all having direct links with the Viennese club. It appears the Melbourne club fell into the latter category. Melbourne Hakoah competed in the strong Melbourne metropolitan competition. Within four years of its foundation the club became Victorian Soccer League third division champions. Hakoah was champion of the Victorian premier league in 1934, 1935 and 1938. The club also won the prestigious Dockerty Cup in 1935. Melbourne Hakoah was a much stronger club than the Sydney Jewish clubs of this period.

The SJSL indicated that it would select a representative team to challenge Melbourne Hakoah. In response the Melbourne club stated that it would contribute £20 towards the expenses of the Sydney team to travel to Melbourne. However, the SJSL preferred that the match was played in Sydney and this is what eventually occurred.

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<sup>95</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 12 August 1927.

<sup>96</sup> *The Maccabean*, 22 March 1929.

<sup>97</sup> D MacKenzie, 'Hakoah Means Strength', *Sports Novels*, Melbourne, 1950, p. 2.

The SJSL placed great importance on the fixture. Possibles versus Probables matches were staged before the representative team was selected. The selection played matches against Lilyfield (which SJSL won 5-1) at St George Sports Ground and a Newcastle Jewish combination in Newcastle (which SJSL won 6-1).<sup>99</sup>

Figure 3.1 A section of the crowd at the first interstate soccer match between the SJSL and Melbourne Hakoah. The match was played at St George Sports Ground on 11 September 1929.

Melbourne Hakoah journeyed to Sydney bringing three teams. The first interstate Jewish soccer games were staged at St George Sports Ground at Kogarah on 11 September 1929. Sydney won each of the three matches by the identical score of 4-3. The event was attended by a large crowd and attracted the attention of the widely-circulated *Daily Telegraph Pictorial*.<sup>100</sup>

The second development of importance was the eviction of Jewish soccer teams from the Moore Park playing fields. In early May 1929 players from the SJSL were ordered from the Moore Park pitches by a park ranger. In response the secretary of the league appealed to the Civic Commissioners.<sup>101</sup> However, after lengthy discussions permission to use the grounds was refused, causing resentment among players and officials.<sup>102</sup> Moore Park was an attractive venue because of its proximity to the eastern suburbs, where most of the players resided, and to transport. Jewish footballers had been playing either rugby league or soccer on the park every Sunday in winter for almost five years. It appears that the ranger took exception to the use of the playing field on a Sunday. At this time Sunday play in Sydney was uncommon and most sport occurred on Saturday afternoons. However, the Jewish Sabbath is

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<sup>98</sup> K DeFries, 'Hakoah in Melbourne', A Hanek (ed.), *Jahre Hakoah Wien 1909-1979*, A Hanek (ed.), p. 22.

<sup>99</sup> *The Maccabean*, 26 July 1929 and 2 August 1929.

<sup>100</sup> *Daily Telegraph Pictorial*, 12 September 1929.

<sup>101</sup> The Sydney City Council was sacked in November 1927, and replaced by three Civic Commissioners appointed by the newly elected Thomas Bavin National Country Party State Government. The stated reasons were the corruption of the Labor Aldermen in the construction of the Bunnerong Power Station and alleged rampant nepotism in the Council. However, there were also other deeper political and ideological reasons. The Civic Commissioners ran the city from November 1927 to October 1930, when a new council was elected and Bavin's government lost power to Jack Lang's Labor Party. See P Ashton, *The Accidental City: Planning Sydney Since 1788*, Hale and Ironmonger, Sydney, 1993, pp. 56-60.

<sup>102</sup> *The Maccabean*, 24 May 1929.

Saturday and weekend Jewish sports were played on Sundays and week nights. The chairman of the SJSL, Jack Solomon, made further representations to the Civic Commissioners on behalf of the league but they refused to change their mind.<sup>103</sup> The league then entered negotiations with Hurstville Council and were granted use of the St George Sports Ground at Kogarah.

*The Maccabean* reported on the first matches to be played there:

The St George Sports Grounds are well equipped, both for players and spectators, and despite the bad weather and short notice of change of grounds, a firm attendance was present for the first matches on Sunday.<sup>104</sup>

Following a round of the competition it was noted that 'there was another good attendance despite the distance from the city. Over a dozen cars and two big lorries brought supporters along.'<sup>105</sup> While the distance of the St George Sports Ground from the main centres of Jewish population in Sydney placed a strain on players and spectators, the facilities were first class. The ground hosted SJSL and representative matches for four years. The Sydney City Council relented on its opposition to Sunday play in 1933 after representations from the MSA, and allowed the SJSL to return to Moore Park.<sup>106</sup> The Moore Park spectator facilities were inferior to those at St George. There was no grandstand or graded hill area to enhance viewing. For the players, the dressing sheds and playing surface were also inferior. Nevertheless, the return to Moore Park was welcomed by players, clubs and spectators alike due to its easier accessibility.

The SJSL continued throughout the 1930s, providing a robust soccer competition for Jewish men. Under the control of the MSA the league conducted a soccer competition with Jewish clubs playing only the occasional match against non-Jewish clubs. The interstate fixture against Melbourne Hakoah continued to be an important point of contact between the diverse Melbourne and Sydney communities. Sydney Jewish soccer clubs flourished and their various social events were an important part

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<sup>103</sup> Council of the City of Sydney Archives, Town Clerk's Files: 3139/17: Playing of Football at Moore Park on Sundays, 2435/29: Moore Park, application to play football on Sunday morning.

<sup>104</sup> *The Maccabean*, vol. 1, no. 26, 14 June 1924.

<sup>105</sup> *The Maccabean*, 7 June 1929.

<sup>106</sup> Council of the City of Sydney Archives, Town Clerk's Files: 0990/33: Permission for Maccabean Soccer Football Club to play football on Sundays at Moore Park.

of the newly created Jewish social scene, that community leaders believed was vital to the viability of the community.

## Cricket

There is no doubt that cricket was an important sport in the Sydney Jewish community. Cricket, the quintessential English game, was embraced by Australians to become the national summer game. Ken Inglis has stated, 'So intense a devotion to the most English of games was a sign of how spontaneously and profoundly Australians embraced the culture of the motherland'.<sup>107</sup> It would have been surprising therefore, if Anglo-Australian Jews, did not embrace this game. The first Jewish interstate sporting contest was a cricket match. It was cricket, followed by athletics, that dominated the sports pages of the Jewish press in the summer months. Undoubtedly some Jews were playing cricket in Sydney before the opening of the Maccabean Hall. After its opening the sport was one of the first taken up by member clubs and one of the first competitions to be brought under the umbrella of the Maccabean Institute. A letter to the editor of the *Hebrew Standard* supporting the interstate sporting contests believed such contests should begin with cricket because:

... in Melbourne and Sydney cricket is well organised on a competitive basis and teams chosen from these clubs will tend to bring the clubs closer together. In view of the sport's representative nature, such a contest will interest practically the whole of the two communities. Besides football, this is the only organised Jewish sport in Melbourne ...<sup>108</sup>

Jewish cricket was reported as 'booming' in January 1925 when there were reports of matches between YPHA and JAAA followed by MSAC and JAAA the following week.<sup>109</sup> Cricket produced one of the Jewish sports stars of the era, Roy Levy. As a first grade player for Waverley, and a future Sheffield Shield player, he was a cut above other players in the Judean Cricket League, but nevertheless he made himself available for the Maccabean Institute team whenever he could, and he scored heavily and took many wickets. In November 1927 he scored 206 out of a total of 320

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<sup>107</sup> K Inglis, 'Imperial Cricket', R Cashman and M McKernan (eds.), *Sport in History: The Making of Modern Sports History*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, Queensland, 1979, p. 170.

<sup>108</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 12 September 1924.

against Brodsky's XI at Moore Park. When the match resumed the following week, spectators witnessed another outstanding batting feat when Alec Marks (a teenager who was playing first grade for Randwick), scored 183 not out. Levy took 5- 89.<sup>110</sup> At the end of the 1927 season Levy finished with an average of 129.3 from 776 runs in six innings. Marks averaged 108.5 from 217 runs in two completed innings. Levy also took 17 wickets at 14.3.<sup>111</sup> The success of Levy and the New South Wales Jewish team against the Victorians ensured cricket occupied an important place in the Jewish community.

In the 1930s the Sydney Judean Cricket Association (SJCA) consisted of five clubs, Bondi CC, Illawarra CC, Maccabean CC, Returned Soldiers CC and YMHA CC. A representative SJCA team was selected each year and toured rural New South Wales where the team received 'the greatest hospitality' and the SJCA was 'held in high esteem by the Country Associations'.<sup>112</sup>

### Athletics

While the Brodsky brothers were the organisers of the JRL it was in athletics that they made their greatest contribution to Jewish sport and sport in general between the wars. The Brodskys were twins who left school at the age of fourteen, but educated themselves so that they were admitted to the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Sydney in their mid-twenties. In the late 1920s and 1930s they were, especially Issy, chiefly responsible for the success of SUAC and responsible for many innovations in Australian athletics including the introduction of bamboo vaulting poles, steel telescope hurdles and high jump and pole vault stands. They had read of these innovations introduced at the Berlin Olympic Games in 1936. The brothers were noted for their persuasive powers and their organisational ability. They were credited with doubling the membership of SUAC and with improving the club's performance in interclub competition, state relays and intervarsity competition.<sup>113</sup> Prior to their involvement at SUAC, they had organised Jewish track and field athletics, initially under the guidance of E S Marks.

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<sup>109</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 4 January & 11 January 1924.

<sup>110</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 25 November & 2 December 1927.

<sup>111</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 16 December 1927.

<sup>112</sup> *The Maccabean Annual 1933*, p. 25.

<sup>113</sup> D Branagan, *From Time to Time, 1878-1978: A History of the Sydney University Athletic Club*, SUAC, University of Sydney, 1978, p. 57.

Athletics was an important summer activity in the community from 1924. The MSA affiliated with the New South Wales Amateur Athletic Association (NSWAAA) in 1925.<sup>114</sup> In keeping with the MSA's stance on Saturday sport, inter-club competition was held on Thursday evenings in the 1925/26 season at the Sydney Sports Ground. This occurred while E S Marks was president of the MSAC and it is possible he was responsible for the access to the ground, one of the city's leading venues. Like cricket, athletics was part of the Anglo-Australian amateur tradition, and it was another sport where Jewish athletes could compete in a 'British way'. It was noted in the *Hebrew Standard* in July 1927, that young men 'are beginning to realise that a healthy mind in a healthy body is an exceedingly sound maxim. You can get that "on your toes feeling" by exercising your limbs. Doubly so when the exercise is taken in the fresh air.'<sup>115</sup>

In subsequent seasons Jewish athletics competitions were staged at Ruschcutters Bay Park with the full complement of track and field events provided on a rotation basis. In 1927 handicap sprint events were introduced and proved popular with spectators and athletes alike. Times, distances and heights achieved compared favourably with New South Wales championship results. Several athletes were well credentialled, among them the aforementioned Myer Rosenblum (who won many state and national titles and later held the state hammer throw record in 1935). There were several state junior champions in Jewish athletic ranks.<sup>116</sup> Jewish Athletics returned to the Sydney Sports Ground in 1933 when it conducted its meetings on Wednesday evenings.<sup>117</sup>

Organisers of the athletic section of the MSA adopted the rhetoric that athletic exercise created a healthy Jew. They also called on the ideals of the British tradition of athleticism. The Jewish press adapted such ideals to an Australian setting, referring to young men gathering to compete in fair competition both for themselves and the community.

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<sup>114</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 8 May 1925.

<sup>115</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 15 July 1927.

<sup>116</sup> '1926-1927 Athletics Review', *Hebrew Standard*, 15 April 1927.

<sup>117</sup> *The Maccabean Annual* 1933, p. 26.

The idea of 'being a sport' was also emphasised by such ideologies: the *Hebrew Standard* contended that 'A young man can only be classed as a sport, when he conforms with the accepted ethics and principles of sportsmanship'.<sup>118</sup> While Nordau and muscular Judaism were not explicitly mentioned, there were echoes of his ideas in such commentary. Athletics was placed on the pedestal as a means to create a more muscular Jew in the 1920s and 1930s:

It is generally conceded, that of all the outdoor sporting activities, the one which possesses the most pleasing aspects is athletics ... continual contact with the pure invigorating air of the athletic arena must afford the participant numerous opportunities to become a glowing ball of health. Inspection of the physique of the members of the famous Maccabean Athletic Union will bear out the veracity of this statement. Inches have been added to chests ... calf and thigh muscles have been developed, and generally the appearance of members has shown substantial improvement. One of the finest feature is the competitive aspect — the striving to beat others in fair competition. Thus a high standard of individual excellence is attained.<sup>119</sup>

Athletics was included in the first Interstate Sporting Carnival in Sydney in the summer of 1925/26 when New South Wales dominated, winning five of the six events contested. Over the first five years of the carnivals Victoria did not fare well because it lacked Jewish athletic (track and field) clubs. Jewish athletes competed for non-Jewish clubs such as the Malvern Harriers. In an attempt to emulate New South Wales, Victoria formed AJAX athletic club in 1929.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 27 May 1927.

<sup>119</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 8 July 1927.

<sup>120</sup> *The Maccabean*, 30 August 1929.



## Women

The biggest perceived crisis facing Australian Jewry in the early twentieth century was the issue of assimilation, with many young Jews reported to be marrying outside the community. This was considered a threat to the future viability of the community. Sport was one of the means to deal with this problem. However, it would not work if women were not included. As a result, from the first major sporting event the community held in 1924, women and girls were included. While the sexist nature of sports reporting of the time is evident in the Jewish press, men's football, cricket and athletics receiving most of the coverage, women nevertheless became an important part of the sporting enterprise.

Developments in Jewish sport coincided with developments for Jewish women in the 1920s. The Council of Jewish Women was established in Sydney in June 1923 by Dr Fanny Reading, one of the earliest women graduates of the University of Melbourne. The aims of the Council were to raise the status of women and girls in the community through social contact, discussion and Jewish education and to assist in the reconstruction of Palestine. The Council became an important instrument — even if some rabbis and more conservative elements opposed it at first — in the fight against assimilation.<sup>121</sup>

Women in Jewish sport were often allocated stereotypical domestic roles: the preparers of food for socials, the supporters on the sidelines of the football field, and participants in dances run by the Maccabean Institute and the various clubs and sections. However, many did not passively accept this role. At the Maccabean Amateur Athletic Club's presentation dinner in 1925, Gertie Rosenblum stated that she saw no reason why women should not show an interest in athletics.<sup>122</sup> From 1925 the tennis section recruited women who competed in singles, doubles and mixed doubles and were accorded full membership rights of the club. When the gymnastics club was established in 1925 women were granted exclusive use of the gymnasium two nights per week and had access to a paid instructor.<sup>123</sup> A survey of

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<sup>121</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, pp. 157-158.

<sup>122</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 24 April 1925.

<sup>123</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 17 July 1925.

the tennis competition draw for Sunday 19 July 1925 indicated that of 84 members listed for courts, 33 were women. Women were also dominant in the organisation of tennis in this era.<sup>124</sup>

Notices for the MSA by 1927 appealed both to 'sportsmen and sportswomen'. Women also played an active role in the organisation of the Union. At a meeting of the MSA in June 1928, it was reported that women outnumbered men. Sadie Klineberg was elected as a joint secretary at this meeting to ensure that women's sports were promoted by the Union. The same issue of *The Maccabean* reported a meeting convened to discuss the establishment of a separate women's sports union, and the expansion of sports available to women to include hockey, basketball, vigoro and baseball. The Maccabean Women's Sports Union (MWSU) was established in 1929 with Fanny Hart as president and Bessie Kensell as secretary.<sup>125</sup>

While women had been involved in the sports enterprise from the beginning, the MWSU enabled them to run their own sports independently while still being affiliated to the MSA. By August 1929 the MWSU was active in basketball, physical culture, swimming and tennis. In 1929, women participated for the first time in the interstate carnival held in Perth. The inclusion of women in the carnival fully integrated them into the sports enterprise. It also enhanced the reputation of the carnival as an important community event that played a role in combating assimilation.

## Conclusions

The Sydney Jewish community, a small but influential section of the population, practised a religion that was viewed with suspicion by some non-Jews, yet many of its members rose to play important roles in Australian society, in business, politics, the military, education and culture. It was a community that struggled to maintain a sense of its own identity, but at the same time did not wish to be seen as distinctive from the rest of Australian society.

The community, which did not face virulent anti-Semitism was anxious to adhere to the 'Australian way of life'. Nevertheless, anti-Semitism was a subtle but underlying

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<sup>124</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 17 July 1925.

motif of Australian political discourse in this period. Publications such as Frank Anstey's *Kingdom of Shylock* and the constant use of anti-Semitic stereotypes in mainstream publications such as the *Bulletin* and *Smith's Weekly* ensured that Jews, no matter how comfortable they felt in Australia, remained aware of social stigma. Immigration from central and eastern Europe increased in this period, and the Anglo-Australian core of the Jewish community was quick to impress on the newcomers the importance of conforming to preferred Australian ways in terms of dress, language and behaviour. Far removed from the centre of the Jewish diaspora, the majority of Australian Jews considered Zionism irrelevant as a political ideology. It went against the grain of loyalty to nation and Empire. However, Australian Jews did contribute financially to the Zionist movement as a charity for less fortunate fellow Jews.

The biggest issue for the community was the perceived danger of acculturation or assimilation, that many believed threatened the long term viability of the community. Community leaders sought ways to discourage intermarriage and to encourage more social interaction amongst the younger generation. Sport, an important part of Australian culture, was considered an ideal vehicle. While Nordau and muscular Judaism were not specifically referred to, the use of the words Maccabean and Maccabi and to the rejuvenated body suggest some indirect influence.

The opening of the Jewish War Memorial coincided with a greater involvement of the Jewish community in sport. The MSA was established to govern Jewish sport in New South Wales and it encouraged a range of sports for both men women. The advent of Jewish interstate carnivals further cemented sport in the community.

Jewish sport in this period also adopted British and Australian notions of athleticism and fair play. The rhetoric of masculinity was important and is most evident in the struggle to develop a rugby league competition in Sydney. The preference for soccer saw a transition to a game considered more suitable to the community.

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<sup>125</sup> *The Maccabean*, 26 July 1929, p. 19.

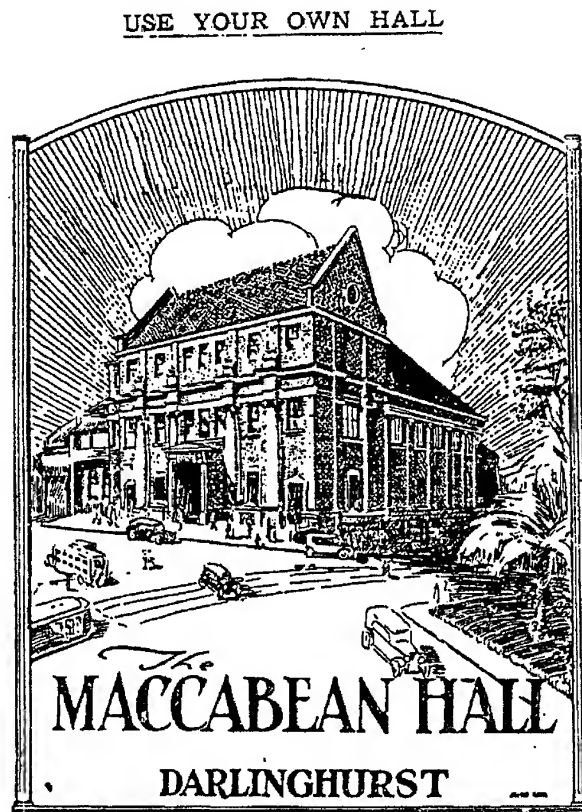
Brian Kino, in explaining the use of sport as a weapon against intermarriage, maintained that Jewish sporting clubs were seen as a marketing force for the desirability of mixing socially within the community.<sup>126</sup>

The following chapter will discuss the impact of Jewish immigrants and refugees from Europe in the late-1930s on Jewish sport in Sydney. It will suggest that the establishment of Sydney Hakoah by the newcomers, particularly those from Vienna, brought European style muscular Judaism to Sydney Jewish sport. These events profoundly affected the way Jewish sport was managed and the way the community saw itself in the years after World War II.

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<sup>126</sup> B Kino, Interview, 1995.

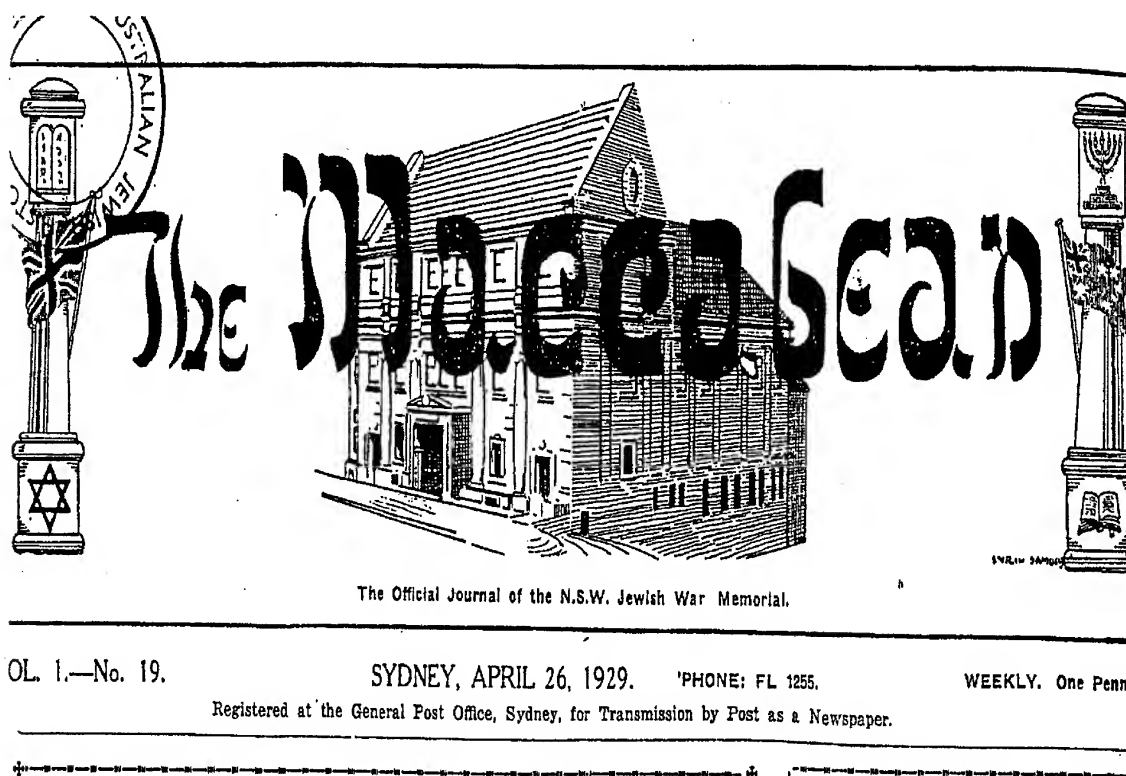
Figure 3.2 Line drawing advertising the Maccabean Hall Darlinghurst published in the *Maccabean Annual* 1933.



For DANCES and SOCIALS, WEDDINGS, ENGAGEMENT  
and BARMITZVAH PARTIES, CONCERTS and CARD  
EVENINGS, etc., the Maccabean Hall offers the finest  
accommodation in Sydney.

Special Hiring Rates on application to the Secretary.  
Darlinghurst Road, Darlinghurst. Phone FL1255.

Figure 3.3 The banner of the journal of the Jewish War Memorial, *The Maccabean*. The banner is replete with symbols of Judaism, the British Empire and Australia.



## Chapter Four

### Sydney Hakoah 1939-1945

‘...where we Jewish migrants could continue the sport we loved so much ...’<sup>1</sup>

#### Introduction

In 1938 and 1939 a group of young men, Jewish refugees mostly from Germany and Austria, gathered regularly for informal soccer games at Rushcutters Bay Park in Sydney’s eastern suburbs. Out of these casual games came the impetus to organise a club to play in a competitive league. This chapter will discuss how the Sydney Hakoah Club was formed in humble circumstances in 1939, and why it persisted during World War II. The chapter will also consider the impact of a tour of Australia by a Jewish international soccer team from Palestine. This tour had an enormous impact on the Australian Jewish community, especially in Sydney where many of the Jewish refugees had settled. The presence of the Palestine team during the formative months of Sydney Hakoah provided a symbolic link (in addition to those that already existed) between the founders of Sydney Hakoah and Hakoah Vienna.

#### Jewish refugees to Australia in the 1930s

The Nuremberg Laws were decreed in Germany on 15 September 1935, depriving Jews of German citizenship. ‘In the next few years some thirteen decrees supplementing the Nuremberg Laws would outlaw the Jew completely’.<sup>2</sup> After ‘Kristallnacht’ in November 1938, even the most patriotic German Jews realised their uncertain future and many decided to leave Germany if possible. The German Government seized property and froze bank accounts, so that those who succeeded in leaving left only with some clothes and 20 German marks in cash (later reduced to 10). Adolf Hitler’s anti-Semitic policies created a refugee problem of immense proportions. Most doors were shut for Jews who wanted to leave Nazi Germany for other European countries. Between 1933 and the occupation of Austria (the Anschluss) on 12 March

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<sup>1</sup> F Weiss, ‘Hakoah Supplement’ *Australian Jewish Times*, 23 October 1975, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> W L Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany*, Secker and Warburg, London 1985, p. 233.

1938, approximately 130 000 Jews left Germany with 32 000 becoming refugees. The Anschluss added another 190 000 potential refugees.

Reports of the ill-treatment of Jews in Austria and the attempts of thousands trying to flee to neighbouring countries led to American President Roosevelt calling for a conference to try to relieve the situation.<sup>3</sup> The conference, held at the resort of Evian in France in June 1938 resulted in an inadequate response to the refugee problem. There was recognition of the massive problem being created by Hitler's anti-Jewish policies, but in a climate of appeasement, little political will to solve it. S Adler Rudel stated that:

The United States of America and Great Britain showed no inclination to admit a larger number (of refugees), with the smaller countries following suit, while political considerations on the part of Whitehall severely limited admission into Palestine.<sup>4</sup>

Jews tried desperately to gain entry to countries outside of Europe, through friends, relatives and various Jewish aid agencies. There were long queues outside South American consulates.<sup>5</sup> Australia agreed to take in 15 000 refugees at Evian, over three years. This was after the Australian delegate, T W White, the Minister for Trades and Customs, had declared:

It is a truism that the Commonwealth has no racial problems and has no desire to import one. On the other hand it prides itself on being a democracy with a strong tradition of tolerance, and any undue suggestion of racial intolerance constitutes a betrayal of our cherished traditions.<sup>6</sup>

W D Rubenstein observed that in the early years of Nazi rule, refugee migration to Australia was small. It amounted to less than 100 in 1933-1935, about 150 in 1936 and approximately 500 in 1937. Australia, a country without a history of accepting refugees, had restrictions in 1934 that stated a non-Empire immigrant must have £500 or a relative in Australia, be an expert in a special industry and be literate in a European language, in order to be allowed entry. The landing money was reduced to £50 in

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<sup>3</sup>S Adler-Rudel, 'The Evian Conference on the Refugee Question', *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook XIII*, New York, 1968, p. 236.

<sup>4</sup>S Adler-Rudel, 'The Evian Conference on the Refugee Question', p. 260.

<sup>5</sup>E G Heppner, *Shanghai Refugee: A Memoir of the World War II Jewish Ghetto*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1995, p. 25.

<sup>6</sup>M J Norst and J McBride, *Austrians and Australia*, Athena Press, Sydney, 1988, p. 97.



March 1936 for a person with a guarantee or to £200 for those without any guarantees.<sup>7</sup>

After the outbreak of war in September 1939, refugee immigration to Australia ceased with Australia failing to fulfil its Evian commitment. There are various estimates of refugee Jewish immigration in the 1930s. Rutland stated that Australia had taken in approximately 7 200 refugees before war broke out.<sup>8</sup> W D Rubenstein, while acknowledging his figures are higher than those used by others, estimated total Jewish refugees from 1933 to 1944 at 9 000.

It is estimated that 1 618 German Jewish refugees landed in Australia.<sup>9</sup> The Austrian component is estimated to be approximately 4 000.<sup>10</sup> The Australian census of 1933 and 1947 show an increase of Austrians from 1 097 to 4 219.<sup>11</sup> The Austrians were for the most part, middle-class professionals or business people with a knowledge of at least one second language, usually French or English. They were either related, knew each other or, at least, had mutual acquaintances. They were also not religiously or politically homogenous. They shared a spectrum of beliefs from orthodox Judaism to atheism and there were many cases of mixed marriages.<sup>12</sup> There were in addition, about 800 Hungarian refugees. Many were classified under the Nuremberg Laws as 'Non-Aryan', though a high proportion were not Jews, but Christians of Jewish or part-Jewish origin. Most of the Hungarians were from the middle-classes with professional or managerial backgrounds.<sup>13</sup>

At the beginning of World War II German, Austrian and Hungarian refugees were classified as enemy aliens, even if they were Jewish, and many were interred in camps, often alongside Nazi supporters. After much agitation within the camps and a concerted campaign for the release of Jewish internees, led by figures such as Sydney Anglican Bishop C Venn Pilcher (one of the most ardent protagonists for the Jewish

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<sup>7</sup> W D Rubenstein, 'Australia and the Refugee Jews of Europe, 1933-1954: A Dissenting View', *Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society*, vol. 10, 1988, pp. 50-523, p. 513.

<sup>8</sup> S Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora: Two Centuries of Jewish Settlement in Australia*, Southwood Press Sydney, 1997, p. 405. The figures are based on Commonwealth Yearbooks as cited by Konrad Kwiet, 'Die Integration Deutsch-Jüdischer Emigranten in Australien', *das Unrechtsregime*, Hamburg 1986.

<sup>9</sup> I Harmstorf and M Cigler, *The Germans in Australia*, AE Press, Melbourne, 1985, p. 141.

<sup>10</sup> M J Norst and J McBride, *Austrians and Australia*, p. 94.

<sup>11</sup> M J Norst and J McBride, *Austrians and Australia*, p. 201.

<sup>12</sup> M J Norst and J McBride, *Austrians and Australia*, Athena Press, Sydney 1988, p. 103.

cause throughout the war years) and many Jewish leaders, the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee was established under the chairmanship of Arthur Calwell.<sup>14</sup> As a result of the committee's work Jewish refugees were eventually classified as 'Friendly Aliens',<sup>15</sup> released and permitted to contribute to the war effort, but were not permitted to bear arms. As a result many were conscripted into or volunteered to join the army labour battalions where they performed menial labour or acted as clerks.

### **The Palestine soccer tour of Australia 1939**

In 1939 the British Mandate of Palestine was comprised of what is today the state of Israel, the autonomous region of Palestine and Jordan (territory east of the river Jordan then known as Transjordan). Soccer was first played in Palestine in 1904 at the English College. The Maccabi organisation formed teams in 1904, the first club being Maccabi Jaffa (now Maccabi Tel Aviv). The arrival of British troops after 1918 gave the game further impetus. All the clubs were Jewish or British. In 1924 Hakoah Vienna, then champions of Austria, toured the mandate leading to many groups enthusiastically forming soccer teams.<sup>16</sup> The Palestine Football Association (PFA) was formed in 1928 and a challenge cup competition began. A league was formed in 1932. It contained no Arab teams.<sup>17</sup>

The makeup of the Palestine team was determined by the forces that were quickly reshaping the Jewish world. There were, for example, 10 336 Jewish immigrants to Palestine in 1937 of which 35 per cent came from Poland, 34 per cent from Germany and the remainder from other countries in eastern Europe.<sup>18</sup> Many of the newcomers had an interest in and became involved in sport. This same pattern was repeated by

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<sup>13</sup> E Kunz, *The Hungarians in Australia*, AE Press, Melbourne, 1985, pp. 74-75.

<sup>14</sup> G S Lee, 'Rescue or Rhetoric', Australian Jewry's Reactions During the Holocaust', *Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society*, vol. x, no. 4, November 1988, p. 283.

<sup>15</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, p.194.

<sup>16</sup> C A W Hirschman (ed.), 'Football in Palestine', *World Football, Official Bulletin of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association*, 28 January 1931, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> B Murray, *Football: A History of the World Game*, Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1994, p. 223. Palestine (in reality the Jews of Palestine) entered the World Cup in 1934 and 1938, being eliminated at the qualification stages. Palestine's first international was played against Egypt, the strongest team in the region at the time, in March 1934.

<sup>18</sup> P J Marks, 'Some Palestine Statistics', *Ivriah Journal*, vol. 12, no. 12, September 1938, p. 25.

Jewish refugees in Australia, the USA, Shanghai in China and elsewhere in the Jewish diaspora. Immigrants Yochanan Sokenik from Poland, Paul Kestenbaum from Germany, and goalkeeper Willy Berger, a Hungarian who had played for Hakoah Vienna, were members of the team that played Egypt in Palestine's first international. Only one player from this first Palestine team, full back Avraham Reznik, toured to Australia in 1939.<sup>19</sup>

The Palestine team toured Australia from 18 June to 28 August 1939 visiting Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia. The objective of the tour was to prepare the Palestine team for the forthcoming 1940 Olympic Games at Helsinki.<sup>20</sup> For Australia it provided more international competition following a tour by India in 1938.

The tour occurred at a time of great difficulty because of the worsening international situation and the plight of European Jewry. It was regarded as enormously significant by Australian Jewish communities and was followed avidly by the Jewish press. Jewish communities around Australia became involved in the tour providing entertainment, black tie dinners and sight-seeing tours as well as catering for the tourists' religious needs. The *Sydney Jewish News* ran a half-page feature on the tour the week that Palestine arrived.<sup>21</sup> While the team was billed 'the Palestine Team' by the Australian soccer authorities and the mainstream press, it was given a variety of names in the Jewish press such as 'Maccabi Palestine' and significantly, 'Palestine Hakoah'. The importance of the tour was outlined in this article under the banner 'Maccabi Palestine':

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<sup>19</sup> S Inglis, 'Friendly Game', *Jewish Chronicle*, 1 April 1994, p. 13. Inglis describes Palestine's first football international played against Egypt in March 1934. The match was played at the Gezira Ground in Cairo before a full house, including the Prime Minister, and Egypt won easily 7-1 with Mokhtar 'El Tich' scoring four goals. In the return match in Tel Aviv on 6 April Palestine fared slightly better while losing 4-0.

<sup>20</sup> 'Soccer In Palestine' *Official Souvenir Program, Palestine versus New South Wales*, Australian Soccer Football Association, July 1939, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> S D Rutland, *Pages of History, A Century of the Australian Jewish Press*, Australian Jewish Press Pty Ltd, Sydney 1995, p. 99.

### The Pride of Race

The arrival in Australia this week of the first Palestine Hakoah soccer football team is an event of unique importance to Jews in Australia and an occasion of immense pride for our National homeland [sic]. Jewish men from Poland, Jews from Germany, Jews from Austria and Jews from every part of the globe who have come to live in Palestine constitute this team of sportsmen who will tour Australia as worthy ambassadors of the Jewish people. The significance of this event embraces, not only the realm of sport, but symbolises a spirit of international camaraderie from the Jews of Palestine to the people of Australia. We can feel truly proud of this national gesture, for the Hakoah team will indeed place the country of the Jews on the same footing in international sport and competition as the countries of other nationals. Palestine awakes from the slumber of the centuries and shall take its proper place with other nations.<sup>22</sup>

The team arrived in Melbourne on 18 June 1939 and was warmly accepted by the Melbourne Jewish establishment. In a civic reception, hosted by Lord Mayor Arthur Coles, speakers emphasised the role sport could play in cementing international relationships and suggested that soccer could help remove prejudices against the Jewish people.<sup>23</sup>

There had been some opposition to the Palestine tour in sections of the soccer community, particularly the New South Wales Soccer Association (NSWSA) which expressed concern about the playing standards of the visitors.<sup>24</sup> However, the first two matches of the tour demonstrated that the Palestine team had the potential to challenge the best opposition in Australia. The visitors defeated Victoria 7-1 in the opening fixture on 24 June at Olympic Park before 4 000 spectators with a gate of £260. It was reported that 'Palestine' gave a sparkling exhibition of the short passing game despite taking fifteen minutes to adjust themselves to the slippery surface'.<sup>25</sup> In the second match Palestine defeated Melbourne Metropolitan 8-1 two days later even though Melbourne Metropolitan was regarded as a stronger combination than the Victorian eleven.<sup>26</sup> Palestine attended Sabbath services on Friday evening and Saturday morning

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<sup>22</sup> 'The Pride of Race', *Sydney Jewish News*, 23 June, 1939.

<sup>23</sup> *Bulletin*, 28 June 1939, p. 33.

<sup>24</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 August 1939. This retrospective article condemned the State Associations for accepting the Palestine tour 'in the dark'. It claimed that the NSWSA fell into line with the other states and the ASA despite its reservations over the proposed tour.

<sup>25</sup> 'Palestine Too Strong', *Age*, 26 June 1939.

<sup>26</sup> 'Second Win in Melbourne', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 June, 1939.

at the Toorak Road Synagogue.<sup>27</sup> After the fixture against Victoria, a ball in the team's honour was hosted by the Melbourne Hakoah Football Club and the 'Kadimah Younger Set' at the Kadimah Hall. This was followed by a concert on the Sunday night and on the Monday there was a communal reception at the Lower Melbourne Town Hall.<sup>28</sup>

Upon arrival in Sydney the team was greeted by members of the NSWSA and Sydney Jewish organisations. The visitors were honoured at a civic reception at the Town Hall before participating in a wreath laying ceremony at the Cenotaph.<sup>29</sup> The team was invited to numerous lunches, dinners and concerts. On 6 July Palestine was hosted at a dinner staged by the YMHA, considered an historic event by the Jewish press. The dignitaries included representatives of the Sydney City Council, the Olympic Council, the New South Wales Rugby Union, the British Empire Jewish Association of ex-Servicemen (BEJAX), Alderman E S Marks, rabbis from the Eastern Suburbs and Newtown Synagogues, Max Freilich of the Australian Zionists, the League of Nations Union, and the National Council of Jewish Women. The president of the YMHA Hans Vidor stated that:

This event is of enormous importance to Jewry as it shows that even under conditions as tragic as the lot of Jews in Europe and Palestine they yet found time to enjoy activities outside their work of a cultural and sporting nature.<sup>30</sup>

The coach of the Palestine team Egon Pollak<sup>31</sup> replied that:

The tour of Australia is the conclusion of a tour of the continents, the object of which is not only the playing of soccer but to show the world that notwithstanding all that had been said and written about the condition of despair and depression this nation did not exist. The up-building and redeeming of ancient land was still progressing and the desire to still further provide was

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<sup>27</sup> 'Melbourne Plans', *Sydney Jewish News*, 23 June, 1939.

<sup>28</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 23 June, 1939.

<sup>29</sup> 'Palestine Soccer Team: Arrival in Sydney today', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 June 1939.

<sup>30</sup> 'Luncheon to Palestine Hakoah Football Team: An Historic Event', *Sydney Jewish News*, 7 July 1939.

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.jewinsport.org/profile.asp?sport=soccer&id=34>. Egon 'Erwin' Pollak played for Hakoah Vienna in the 1920s and won one international cap for Austria in 1924. Pollak toured the USA with Hakoah in 1926 and afterwards remained in the USA for one season where he played 19 games for the New York Giants. Later he went to Palestine where he successfully managed the Maccabi Tel Aviv team for many years.

stronger than ever. This was exemplified in the fact that during the period of unrest no less than 14 new settlements were founded. The lands for settlements in many cases were from the most ardent anti-Jew agitators. With regard to the players they were lads who still followed the many avocations, day labourers, government officials, business people and they took up sport for the love of it and were purely amateur. Their training was going on, and under the protected conditions, sometimes while actual firing was going on and under the protection of armed sentries.<sup>32</sup>

Palestine's first Sydney match was played against New South Wales on 1 July 1939 at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG). The New South Wales team surprised home supporters when they appeared in red jerseys (rather than their traditional light blue) in deference to Palestine's light blue, and they went on to defeat the visitors 6-4. The *Bulletin* reported:

The visitors relied on a short passing game; but it was exaggeratedly short, just as their footwork proved too delicate. The Palestinians, mostly short and solid of build, are nippy, but in the long stretches, when the game was made more open by the longer passing of New South's forwards, they were run off their legs.<sup>33</sup>

According to George Keen, who attended the game, many recent immigrants were among the crowd. Keen recalled that many Jews attended the match, stating that Jews attached much importance to the game because of the problems of European Jewry at the time.<sup>34</sup>

An all-New South Wales Australian team defeated Palestine 7-5 in the first international at the SCG on 8 July. Australia also won the second international 2-1 in Brisbane but Palestine regained some pride with a 2-1 win in the third in Sydney on 22 July before 'the poorest house in international soccer in Australia'.<sup>35</sup> In Newcastle on 29 July a strengthened Australian team won the Fourth Test 4-1, 'the home halves made their opponents look like third raters'.<sup>36</sup> The *Sydney Morning Herald* suggested

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<sup>32</sup> 'Luncheon to Palestine Hakoah Football Team: An Historic Event', *Sydney Jewish News*, 7 July 1939.

<sup>33</sup> *Bulletin*, 5 July 1939 p. 33.

<sup>34</sup> George Keen, Interview, August 1997. Keen was founder and President of Kadimah Progress 1948 to 1972.

<sup>35</sup> *Bulletin*, 26 July 1939, p. 33.

<sup>36</sup> *Bulletin*, 2 August 1939, p. 33.

that the crowd of 11 000 spectators was the 'largest northern crowd attracted by any code of football this season' but it 'spent a bored afternoon watching soccer inferior in excitement in skill to that provided by most New South Wales state league games'.<sup>37</sup>

From this point of the tour the press became negative in its assessment of Palestine. One observer believed, 'a final verdict on the Palestine side must be that it would be lucky to hold its own with any of our best club teams, and that teams with the high scoring traditions of Wallsend and Metters would on their day defeat it by margins bigger than any recorded against it in test matches'.<sup>38</sup> The Palestine manager R S Arizi responded to such criticism at a post-match dinner contending that:

the press with some exceptions had not treated the side fairly. It had not given the team the kindly assistance it gave to other touring teams and had made the tour more difficult. The true worth of the Australian side as one of the best amateur sides in the world has not been recognised and the ASA sent the team travelling around on second class transport.<sup>39</sup>

The Fifth and final Test in Melbourne resulted in a 4-4 draw. However, criticism of the tour continued, especially in Sydney. The Australian Soccer Association (ASA) was castigated for their gamble in inviting such a team of unknown quality.

The wretched standard of play in the fourth test match caused strong resentment among paying spectators, and many workers for the advance of soccer in this country have since encountered hostility which has convinced them that one more such match would wreck soccer in the northern coalfields, the chief Australian nursery of the game.<sup>40</sup>

Although the international series was easily won by Australia, the negative reaction of the Australian press to Palestine is surprising. Most of the games were close and high scoring (see table 4.2). Palestine was not be blame for the politically motivated and penny pinching selection policies of the ASA, introduced to quell interstate jealousies, save travelling costs and appease state league teams that were playing important matches at the same time as the internationals. These policies meant that the best available Australian team rarely played.

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<sup>37</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 July 1939.

<sup>38</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 July 1939.

<sup>39</sup> 'Australia Wins Rubber,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 July 1939.

<sup>40</sup> 'Poor Class Prejudicing Code, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 August 1939.

Perhaps the racial prejudices of the day were evident in some of the criticism. The *Sydney Morning Herald* wondered if spectators in the future would attend the fixtures of 'teams not from the British Isles', with South Africa being an exception with its 'vigorously robust style of play' of a type much like Australia's own'. The same paper argued that New South Wales should 'insist that rule interpretations should be those obtaining in the United Kingdom and in Australia, not the visitors interpretation of the more anaemic rules of the international association'.<sup>41</sup> These comments hint at possible anti-Semitic stereotyping of the Palestine team, of the team being averse to the physical contest.

The final leg of the tour involved matches in Perth and was managed by a committee made up jointly of members of the 'Perth Hebrew Congregation,<sup>42</sup> the Maccabean League and the Western Australian Soccer Football Association (WASFA)'.<sup>43</sup> Three of the Palestine players, Avraham Reznik, Avraham Bet Ha-Levi and Meneham Mirimovitch remained behind in Australia and joined the Australian armed forces. Bet Ha-Levi was killed in action against Japanese forces in Papua New Guinea.<sup>44</sup> Mirimovitch played for the Maccabean Soccer Club in Perth in 1939 and 1940. He was killed in action at Wewak in New Guinea.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> 'Poor Class Prejudicing Code, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 August 1939.

<sup>42</sup> In the 1933 census the Jewish population of Perth was 2 105 and increased to 2 294 at the 1947 count. W D Rubenstein, *Judaism in Australia*, p. 23.

<sup>43</sup> *Palestine versus Western Australia, Souvenir Program*, WASFA, Perth 26 August 1939, p. 8. The importance of the tour as a cultural exchange was well exemplified at Perth. The Palestine manager R S Arizi demonstrated an interest in the surf life saving movement. Before leaving Perth he and several of the Palestine players were examined for the Surf Life Saving Certificate at Cottesloe Beach, which they passed. The West Australian Surf Life Saving Association presented Arizi with 24 instruction books and a reel, belt and line to take home. He expressed an interest in starting a similar movement in Palestine. *West Australian*, 28 August 1939; records of West Australian Surf Life Saving Association, provided by Ed Jaggard whose father tested Arizi and several other Palestine players for their Bronze Medallion. Coinciding with the Palestine soccer tour was the visit of the Vienna Mozart Boys Choir to Perth. The boys attended the final Palestine games and two days later took the field themselves for a soccer game against Queens Park Convent School ... 'the boys adopted the Austrian style of play which was exploited by the Palestine team'. *West Australian*, 29 August 1939. The choir was detained in Australia during the war. They were interned as enemy aliens for a short time. Many settled in Australia after the war. See Norst M J, and McBride J, *Austrians and Australia*,

<sup>44</sup> S Inglis, 'Friendly Game', *Jewish Chronicle*, Tel Aviv, 1 April 1994. It is interesting to note that in this article, Nachum Ha-Levi, the historian of the Israeli Football Association, refers to the touring team of 1939 as 'Maccabi Tel-Aviv'— the leading club team in Palestine at that time.

<sup>45</sup> R G Roberts (ed.), *The Western Australian Soccer Jubilee Handbook 1896-1946*, Perth 1947, p. 48. Maccabean Soccer Club in Perth was founded in 1931 by W Kino and R Steinberg.



Table 4.1 Summary of the Palestine tour of Australia in 1939

Date	Opponent	Venue	Score
24 June	Victoria	Olympic Oval	7-1
27 June	Melbourne Metropolitan XI	Olympic Oval	8-1
1 July	New South Wales	Sydney Cricket Ground	4-6
4 July	Northern Districts	Cessnock Sports Ground, Newcastle	3-1
8 July	Australia 1st Test	Sydney Cricket Ground	5-7
12 July	Queensland	Brisbane Exhibition Ground	5-1
15 July	Australia 2nd Test	Brisbane Exhibition Ground	1-2
17 July	Ipswich	Ipswich Oval, Qld	9-1
18 July	Queensland XI	Toowoomba Oval, Qld	13-3
22 July	Australia 3rd Test	Sydney Cricket Ground	2-1
25 July	South Coast	Woonoona Oval, Wollongong	3-2
29 July	Australia 4th Test	Newcastle Sports Ground	1-4
30 July	Northern Districts	Cessnock Sports Ground	2-2
5 August	Australia 5th Test	Fitzroy Ground, Melbourne	4-4
7 August	Victoria	Olympic Oval	3-4
12 August	South Australia	Hindmarsh Oval, Adelaide	4-2
16 August	South Australia	Adelaide Oval	8-0
26 August	Western Australia	Subiaco Oval, Perth	4-4
28 August	Western Australia	Subiaco Oval, Perth	7-3

### Importance of the Palestine tour

The Palestine tour illuminates the context in which Sydney Hakoah was formed. Public reactions were often negative and overly critical at a time when anti-Semitic comment regularly appeared in the major newspapers. Some right wing anti-Semitic groups had also surfaced in the 1930s.<sup>46</sup> With the prospect of war, animosity towards Jewish

<sup>46</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, pp. 197-201 discusses groups that developed anti-Semitic policies and/or philosophies in Australia in the 1930s, included Eric Campbell's New Guard Movement founded in 1931, The Douglas Credit Party of Australia founded in 1934, The Guild of Watchmen, The Australian Unity League, The Australian Nazi movement, The British Australia Association and The Australia First Movement. These groups were anti-Semitic to varying degrees.

refugees was growing, particular in Sydney and Melbourne. The *Sydney Sun*, for instance, displayed headlines such as 'Tobacconists Alarmed — Refugees in Cut Price Shops', accusing Jewish refugees of setting up shops, paying lower wages and undercutting standard prices.<sup>47</sup> Anti-refugee alarmist headlines hardened public opinion against refugees and this may have affected reportage of the soccer tour.

International sporting tours provided an opportunity for local politicians and businessmen to posture and network. They provided a setting for a form of unofficial international relations. The Palestine tour offered an excellent opportunity for leading Jewish figures to meet frequently with, and to lobby, important government and community leaders. For many in the Jewish community, especially for the minority Zionists, the tour provided an opportunity to openly express something akin to national pride.

For the refugees who formed Sydney Hakoah the tour provided a timely focus. Jewish sport was in the process of being reorganised. With its wide publicity in the popular and Jewish press and the round of functions associated with it, the tour enhanced the importance of sport in the community. For Australian Zionists, the presence of the Palestine team offered tangible evidence of progress towards the national goal.

Palestine's football had a significant Hakoah Vienna influence in terms of its ethos and the Austrian style of game it favoured. Egon Pollack provided a likely link between the naming of Sydney Hakoah, the Palestine tour and Hakoah Vienna. He was a well-known former player with Hakoah Vienna and was imbued with its political and sporting philosophy as well as its tactical methods. His address at the 6 July YMHA dinner (quoted above) reflected on wider social and cultural issues. It is feasible that the prominence given to the visiting 'Hakoah' team, the presence of Pollack, and the affinity of European Jewish sportsmen for Hakoah Vienna, encouraged Sydney's newly arrived immigrants to rename their recently formed soccer club 'Hakoah'. The evidence presented below suggests the club that became Sydney Hakoah at the time of the Palestine visit to Sydney, was originally formed as Sydney Judean Soccer Club (SJSC).

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Some, such as the Australia First Movement in its paper *The Publicist*, were virulently anti-Semitic.

<sup>47</sup> *Sydney Sun*, 7 June 1939.

## The formation of Sydney Hakoah

In 1988 Sydney Hakoah celebrated its fiftieth anniversary and published a short club history. It stated that Sydney Hakoah was named in a 'nostalgic tribute to its famous Viennese namesake'. 'Relying on fading memories' and 'records', it stated that:

the club's formal establishment took place in January 1939 when Sigmund Dukes called a meeting at the Maccabean Hall. Some 30 people turned up and proceeded to elect Karl Raymond as its first President ... later that year Sigi Dukes followed in the Presidency.<sup>48</sup>

Sigmund (Sigi) Dukes was born in Vienna in 1900, joined Hakoah Vienna Football Club in 1914, and remained a member until he and his wife Margarethe left Vienna in June 1938 and emigrated to Australia.<sup>49</sup> He recalled the Sydney club's founding. According to Dukes, when he visited the Maccabean Hall in Sydney, he discovered a group of 'Emigres' playing soccer at Rushcutters Bay Park each Sunday. Dukes joined them and claimed that he later called a meeting at the Maccabean Hall in January 1939, which was attended by about 30 people. It formed the Hakoah Soccer Club.<sup>50</sup>

While it is not certain if Dukes became president of Sydney Hakoah until at least 1941, there is no doubt he was one of the early driving forces of the club, and one of those who represented a tangible link with Hakoah Vienna. Austrian-born<sup>51</sup> Fritz Weiss provided another link to Hakoah Vienna. One of the stars of the original Sydney Hakoah team from 1939 to 1941 and later president in 1954 he stated in 1976 that:

I would like to mention why we called the club 'Hakoah'. Most of us were somehow connected with the Hakoah Vienna and were really lost without a sports club in a strange country, where we Jewish migrants could continue the sport we loved so much.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> 'Refugee visionaries dreamt a great dream', *Hakoah Star: Special Semi-Centenary Issue*, vol. 12 no 5, October-November 1988, p. 6.

<sup>49</sup> H Klimt, Letter to Dr Körner, 10 July 1944. In this letter Klimt mentions Sigi Dukes as one of 'our old members' from soccer. A copy and a translation of this are in the author's possession. See appendix.

<sup>50</sup> *Hakoah Star*, February 1986.

'Death of Great Hakoah Pioneer', *Hakoah Star*, vol. 4 no. 10 November, 1980, p. 11.

<sup>52</sup> F Weiss, 'Hakoah Supplement' *Australian Jewish Times*, 23 October 1975.

The men who founded Hakoah could not have known that they were founding a club which would become national soccer champions of Australia and an institution which would become a hub of Jewish life in Sydney by the end of the century. Much of what has been written about the history of the club has been gleaned from oral testimony, when memories of the precise sequence of events and personalities involved have become dim and confused by subsequent events. In the absence of minute books and with only a few annual reports available (until 1970), it is necessary to rely on contemporary newspapers and other coverage, especially by the Sydney Jewish press, and compare them with the memories of the founding members and some private archives to piece together the early history of the club.

The influx of refugees to Sydney in 1938 and 1939 had placed many demands on the Sydney Jewish community because most refugees settled in Sydney. In common with other community organisations the MSA soon came under pressure to provide for the newcomers. By May 1939 moves were being made to:

reorganise Sydney's Jewish sporting activities leading to the formation of teams in cricket, football, tennis, fencing, table tennis, basketball, hockey, boxing, wrestling, gymnastics, athletics and swimming.<sup>53</sup>

A meeting of the MSA declared that the soccer, tennis, boxing and athletics sections had sufficient support to start immediately. These sections were given authority to form their own committees. As these sports had been well organised in the community for many years, it can be assumed that the committee was referring to a restructuring in order to deal with the large number of newcomers. The meeting also considered the planned visit to Perth for the annual interstate games.

The Jewish press in 1939 recorded that a soccer team named 'Sydney Judean Soccer Club' (SJSC) competed in the Sydney and District league.<sup>54</sup> The earliest recorded mention of Sydney Hakoah was related to SJSC and occurred in the *Hebrew Standard* on 13 July 1939. It stated that :

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<sup>53</sup> 'Maccabean Sports Association', *Hebrew Standard*, 4 May 1939, p. 6.

<sup>54</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 25 May 1939. SJSC held its first meeting on May 14 1939, formalizing 'work that has already been done'. Leo Levy was elected chairman, Willi Gross, vice president and Brian Modell secretary. E Hammerman and A Taffe were also on the committee.

As the latest development in Sydney's Jewish sport the Hakoah has been formed, the former Judean Soccer Association being the soccer section. The other sections already very active are men's handball and ladies handball.<sup>55</sup>

The SJSC had held its first meeting on 14 May 1939 with more than 30 'boys' in attendance. Leo Levi was elected first chairman, Willi Gross vice-president, Brian Modell secretary. Ernie Hammermann and Arnold Jaffe were also elected to the committee.<sup>56</sup>

It is important to note, first, that the SJSC was not a body whose purpose was to conduct a Jewish competition, rather it was a Jewish club intending to compete in an established district league. Second, the influx of a number of competent (some skilled) soccer players from Europe would have enhanced a Jewish community competition both in terms of numbers of players and standard of play. Although Jewish clubs in Sydney often competed outside the community by the late 1930s, the act of joining a competitive non-Jewish league was consistent with the Hakoah Vienna philosophy familiar to the majority of men involved in the new club. The announcement of an SJSC team to play a match on 4 June 1939 in the Jewish press provides the first known team list. The players listed below played for SJSC/Hakoah for the remainder of 1939 and the 1940 seasons. The team was:

**Goal;** S Meissner, **Full Backs;** Arnold Jaffe, Paul May, **Halfs;** Adolph Hammermann, Charlie May, Brian Modell, **Forwards;** Jack Ackerman, Willi Gross, Adi Ert, Alfie Landmann, David Meissner.<sup>57</sup>

SJSC drew 3-3 with competition leaders Rose Bay-Vaucluse on 8 July 1939 with goals from Alf Landman (2), and Willi Gross — the club's first recorded goal scorers.<sup>58</sup> It was at this time that the SJSC took the step of changing its name to Sydney Hakoah and the name first appeared in the Sydney Jewish press. Perhaps its members had already begun to call it Hakoah informally. The traditions and memories of Hakoah Vienna would have been clear in the minds of the mostly European team,

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<sup>55</sup> 'Sports club "Sydney Hakoah"', *Hebrew Standard*, 13 July 1939, p. 6.

<sup>56</sup> These men are not mentioned in club histories as officials in Sydney Hakoah's early years (although all except Levi appeared in the earliest known photograph of Sydney Hakoah).

<sup>57</sup> 'Sydney Judean Soccer Association', *Hebrew Standard*, 1 June 1939.

particularly the Austrians. In the beginning, calling the club SJSC may have appealed to members as a way of symbolising their allegiance to their new home. However, it is understandable that refugees and immigrants wanted to name their club after some entity from the old country, a symbolic link with their origins. This practice became commonplace in Australia after World War II and continues in many countries since then.<sup>59</sup> Another factor may have contributed to the idea of calling the club Hakoah. In the very week that the name change occurred, the touring Palestine soccer team played in Sydney.

### **Hakoah Sydney Soccer Club 1939-1942**

In 1939 SJSC/Hakoah enjoyed a relatively successful season, considering it was a new club. Two teams were entered in the Eastern Suburbs League and matches were played at Moore Park, Queens Park and Christiansen Park Vaucluse. Training was held at Ruschcutters Bay Park and at the Maccabean Gymnasium. Sam Pisam, the team manager who acted as an interpreter between the club and Association officials, stated that the team wore blue shorts but did not have proper shirts.<sup>60</sup> The earliest known photograph (Fig.4.1) of Sydney Hakoah supports this. The players appear in a variety of white shirts without any logo.<sup>61</sup>

Hakoah was competitive and remained in championship contention until the last match. The first team developed a regular core of players with those listed in the first Sydney Hakoah team still playing in 1941. However, on some occasions first team players backed up to play in the reserves. The club met regularly at the Maccabean Hall on Tuesday evenings in order to 'help maintain close contact between our members and raise our standard of play by theoretical instruction'.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> 'Sydney Judean Soccer Association', *Hebrew Standard*, 14 July 1939.

<sup>59</sup> J Harrison, *Bosnia in Yorkshire*, unpub. Conference paper, British Society for Sports History conference, University of Huddersfield, 1995. Harrison offers a recent example of this phenomenon, the establishment of a soccer club in Yorkshire by Bosnian refugees. The team played in Bosnian national colours adorned with the national symbol as their crest.

<sup>60</sup> S Pisam, 'Play It Again Sam', *Hakoah Star*, vol. 10. no. 3, April 1986.

<sup>61</sup> S Pisam, 'Play It Again Sam'.

Table 4.2 SJSC/Sydney Hakoah fixtures and results in 1939 ('A' team only).

SJSC/Hakoah scores appear first.

Opponents	Date	Venue	Result
Moore Park Rangers	14 May	Unknown	3-0
St Johns	21 May	Rushcutters Bay	3-1
Moore Park Rangers	28 May	Moore Pk	2-4
Bus Drivers SC	4 June	Rushcutters Bay	W (Forfeit)
St Pauls	11 June	Queens Pk	0-3
Bye	18 June	Bye	Bye
Rose Bay	25 June	Christianson Pk	1-1
Rose Bay-Vaocluse*	8 July	Unknown	3-3
Rose Bay Vaocluse*	6 August	Christianson Pk	4-3
Scottish FC*	20 August	Queens Pk	4-2
Camperdown*	27 August	Queens Pk	0-0
St Pauls*	3 September	Christianson Pk	Unknown

\* Matches played as Hakoah. All previous matches played as SJSC.

Sources: *Hebrew Standard* and *Sydney Jewish News*, May to September 1939.

Hakoah played a 'short passing style', an indication of the Austrian influence or perhaps inspired by the play of the 1939 Palestine team. Hakoah was regarded as 'fast and clever' but able to 'mix it' when necessary.<sup>63</sup> Mid-way through the season there was some talk that the team may be 'joined by 'two former members of the Viennese Hakoah', Knepler and Knussbrecher, though it is not known whether this eventuated.<sup>64</sup> It is evident that some players from Europe were drafted during the season. A report stated that 'the newcomers, who come from various well-known clubs in Europe, showed very good form and will make the second team very strong for this week's match against Scottish SFC'.<sup>65</sup> However, such players appeared only in the second team. Few of the hoped for 'star' players are identified and the press consistently focused on stalwart players such as Paul May, a brilliant centre half and former

<sup>62</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 1 June 1939.<sup>63</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 31 August 1939.<sup>64</sup> Knepler and Knussbrecher do not appear on existing first team lists. Second team lists were not published.

member of Hakoah Vienna, Adi Ert from Germany, Willie Gross and Alf Landmann. They were the nucleus of the team in its first three seasons along with Fritz Weiss, Sigi Dukes and Brian Modell.

The 1940 AGM of Sydney Hakoah was held on 14 February and was well attended. Leo Levy was re-elected president, and Alf Landmann vice-president. Brian Modell resigned as secretary for business reasons and Charlie May took over.<sup>66</sup> The club was not well off financially with just 7s 6d in the bank. All costs, such as entry fees, goodwill and registration fees were made up by the individual members.<sup>67</sup> The success of the 1939 season encouraged the club to enter a higher league in 1940, reflecting the ambition that characterised the club throughout its history. In 1940 Sydney Hakoah entered the Sydney and District Second Division, the third highest level of soccer available in New South Wales at the time. A second team was maintained in the Eastern Suburbs League. Hakoah's first team competed against many of the tough and well organised factory teams that thrived in the upper echelons of Sydney soccer between 1905 and 1939. It included teams such as Bradford Kendalls, Hordernians, Carpet Manufacturers and Atlas (a Greek community team).<sup>68</sup>

It took some time to adjust to the new league. Hakoah lost 5-0 to Bradford Kendalls in their first game:

It was only fine defensive play of Grunsett, Paul May and Freddy Gross that kept the more experienced steel-workers at bay. Through working very hard the Hakoah eleven were unable to penetrate the opponents defence, due to the inability of players to settle down.<sup>69</sup>

Hakoah struggled to compete with the well organised and well resourced teams in the league. Another drawback for Hakoah was that its teams were required to travel extensively around Sydney rather than play in the eastern suburbs. This placed a strain on refugees with few resources trying to establish themselves in their new home. There

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<sup>65</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 17 August 1939.

<sup>66</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 22 February 1940. These important officials are ignored in the Sydney Hakoah official history.

<sup>67</sup> Annual Reports', *Hebrew Standard*, 13 February 1941, p. 7.

<sup>68</sup> P Mosely, 'A Social History of Soccer in New South Wales', unpub. PhD thesis, University of Sydney 1984, pp. 166-201 and p. 360.

<sup>69</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 4 April 1940.



was also less support for Hakoah teams when they played away from the eastern suburbs. The result was a dismal season with Hakoah finishing last in the table. The reserve team finished fourth out of seven in the Eastern Suburbs League. The annual report for 1940 rationalised the poor result explaining that it was 'due to the loss of star players early in the season through injury and insufficient practice of players during the week'.<sup>70</sup>

The financial situation of the club improved in 1941 when the first annual dance, on 16 November 1940,<sup>71</sup> attracted 400 people and raised around £500.<sup>72</sup> The AGM for 1941 was held in the Maccabean Hall on 16 January.<sup>73</sup> Charlie May remained as secretary and Sigi Dukes was probably elected president at this time. Dukes, whom Fisher and Morrison list as president from 1941 to 1945, is mentioned for the first time in match reports: 'the 40 year-old Sigi Dukes proved that he is still an iron hard defender whom many youngsters can take as an example of spirit and courage in the game of soccer'.<sup>74</sup> He played ten out of fourteen games for the first team in the 1941 season.<sup>75</sup>

The club made the sensible decision to withdraw from the Sydney and District League and to re-enter the first team in the 'A' Grade of the Eastern Suburbs League and with the second team playing in the 'C' Grade. They no longer had to compete with the strong factory sides each week. Travelling and related costs were cut. Patrons could watch both Hakoah teams at the one venue on the same day.

The 1941 season was a successful and well-documented one for Sydney Hakoah's senior team. The *Sydney Jewish News* noted that a match against Bondi Marine<sup>76</sup> attracted a large crowd at Queens Park, making the benefit of playing in the Eastern Suburbs apparent.<sup>77</sup> Sam Pisam hinted at an anti-Semitic element or at least hostility towards Hakoah: 'It was a general rule that when Hakoah played most opposition teams seemed to miss the ball and kick our ankles but we still had fun playing and the

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<sup>70</sup> 'Annual Reports', *Hebrew Standard*, 13 February 1941.

<sup>71</sup> 'Annual Reports', *Hebrew Standard*, 13 February 1941.

<sup>72</sup> Recalled in *Sydney Jewish News*, 22 August 1941.

<sup>73</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 10 January 1941.

<sup>74</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, June 27 1941.

<sup>75</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney 1938-1994*, p. 27.

<sup>76</sup> Bondi Marine, an amateur club founded by British immigrants in 1935, have always attracted a large following from expatriate English living in the eastern suburbs. *Bondi Marine Soccer Football Club: A History 1935-1985*, The Club, Sydney, 1985.

<sup>77</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 20 June 1941.

camaraderie was very close'.<sup>78</sup> George Shipp one of the youngest players in 1941, (he played one first team game in which he scored a goal) does not accept this view. He believed any problems that occurred between Hakoah and other clubs were caused more by ethnicity than anti-Semitism. He noted that most of the Hakoah players were German speaking Austrians. Most of their opponents were Australian, British, Italian or Greek. He stated:

We had fights ... the Rose Bay Game, there was also a game somewhere near Glebe with an Italian team, a lot of problems. I didn't see it as anti-Semitism. I saw it as ethnic or whatever and that would not be surprising. But I never felt in any danger. I never felt a significant element (of anti-Semitism) in my football. The Jewish press may have implied it was anti-Semitic, but that is typical of the Jewish press. It was more ethnic ... it could well be that among spectators there was abuse or something of that nature. But it never penetrated on to the field.<sup>79</sup>

There is no doubt that Hakoah was involved in the occasional violent match. In 1941 there was a report of violent play and a subsequent pitch invasion by spectators:

One of the roughest matches Hakoah ever fought was against Rose Bay last Saturday when players and spectators were involved in a regrettable incident a few minutes before the final blow. One of Rose Bay's forwards fell over the foot of left full back Jack Aisenberg. Both players were on the ground but the Rose Bay forward who got up quicker became so wild that he started hitting Aisenberg who was still on the ground. Some of the Hakoah's players rushed to their helpless mate and soon players from both teams and even spectators were seen in the mix-up. Only through the intervention of the referee who ordered the Rose Bay forward as well as the spectators off the ground were we able to finish the game with another two minutes to play. The result was 1-1 which justifies the match.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> S Pisam, 'Play It Again Sam', 1986.

<sup>79</sup> G Shipp, Interview December 1997. George Shipp, a Viennese Jew, emigrated to Australia with his family in 1938 after his father had been warned by a colleague he should leave Vienna. His father, a lawyer, ran a cake shop for many years in Charing Cross in Sydney's eastern suburbs. Shipp left school at fourteen and became a compositor, but finished his education at night school. Later, he wrote his PhD 'sitting in a coffee shop in Kings Cross' and was Professor of Political Science at the University of New South Wales for many years. For many years he was also General Secretary of the Workers Education Association. Professor Shipp described himself as a 'cultural Jew' and not a Zionist.

<sup>80</sup> *Sydney Jewish Times*, 15 June 1941.

It is not known why this violence occurred, though Shipp's explanation of animosity towards German speakers seems a likely cause. Many Australians did not differentiate between German or Austrian Jews and Nazi supporting German nationals. This was reflected in government policy on the internment of enemy aliens for a time. The incident may have been sparked by the hot-headed reactions of individual players that brought some simmering situation to a head. On the next occasion the two teams met on 28 June, Hakoah player Paul May was taken off injured in another hard game 'which seemed to exceed limits towards the end of the match'.<sup>81</sup>

Hakoah finished second to Bondi Marine in the 1941 championship by a single point. The Association decided to hold an end of season knock-out competition after a two week break and Hakoah was once again drawn to play Rose Bay. The Association selected a 'first class referee' to control this match 'in order to avoid any repetition of those unfortunate happenings of previous matches with Rose Bay'.<sup>82</sup>

Hakoah's decision to run two teams in 1941 put the club under pressure. In the first round the reserve team was defeated 5-0 by Scotch and could field only nine players.<sup>83</sup> For the second match it was able to muster some new players. However, within weeks the team suffered bad defeats because of a shortage of players, injuries and the priority to field a full side in the first team.<sup>84</sup> On 20 June the club announced the withdrawal of the second team from competition: 'Due to enlistment as well as injuries of several B grade players the management of Hakoah regret very much to be compelled to withdraw their second team from further activities'.<sup>85</sup>

At the completion of the 1941 season the second annual Hakoah Ball again proved successful with around 400 in attendance. Income from this event was ample to provide finance for the 1942 season. The 1941 season was Hakoah's last full season of

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<sup>81</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 4 July 1941.

<sup>82</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 18 July 1948. The match took place at Centennial Park and although no violence was reported there was another unfortunate incident which brought an abrupt end to Hakoah's season. Paul May injured his abdomen, received attention from first aid officers and resumed the game. After the match his condition deteriorated and at midnight he was admitted to St Vincent's Hospital and had his spleen removed. May spent some time in hospital and recovered in time to attend the second annual Hakoah Ball on 18 October 1941. Perturbed by the serious injury to May, Hakoah cancelled their final fixture of the season with Bondi Marine. *Sydney Jewish News*, 8 August 1941.

<sup>83</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 9 May 1941.

<sup>84</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 16 May 1941.

<sup>85</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 20 June 1941.

competition until 1945.<sup>86</sup> Table 4.3 records statistics for the season exposing the myth that Hakoah suspended play during the war.

Table 4.3 Hakoah results in 1941. Hakoah score appears first. 'P' indicates pre-season friendly.

Date	Opponent	Score	Scorers
29 March P	David Jones	5-0	5 unknown
6 April P	Sydney Scottish	9-2	Weiss 4, 5 unknown
20 April P	Bondi Marine	2-7	Howard, Weiss
27 April P	Advance	3-0	Huber 2, Weiss
3 May	Bondi Marine	2-1	Weiss 2
10 May	Sydney Scottish	6-2	Weiss 5, Ert
18 May	Rose Bay	2-2	Green, Landmann
23 May	Bondi Marine	1-7	Weiss
31 May	Sydney Scottish	3-3	Howard, Weiss, P May
7 June	Rose Bay	1-1	P May
14 June	Bondi Marine	1-1	Weiss
21 June	Sydney Scottish	4-0	Weiss 4
28 June	Rose Bay	0-4	
12 July *	Sydney Scottish	3-4	Shipp, Gross, Weiss
2 August	Rose Bay	0-2	
9 August	Bondi Marine	•	•

\* Forfeit. Sydney Scottish could not field a full team of its own registered players.

Hakoah two competition points were awarded to Hakoah. The teams then played an unofficial match which Hakoah lost.

• forfeit

Dwindling numbers due to call-ups to the labour battalions made it difficult for the club to continue in 1942. While the club fielded a team in March, April and May it was forced to withdraw from competition for the remainder of the war on 22 May 1942. A press release stated:

Through the call-up of the majority of Hakoah's members, the club has ceased to play this season for the duration of the war. But those players who are not in camp will field a team to play a patriotic match against our soldiers stationed at Ascot Military camp on Sunday June 7th.

<sup>86</sup> The first team had an improved record winning six, drawing four and losing five matches. Fritz Weiss had an outstanding season scoring 21 goals in thirteen games including five in one match.

[sic] The admission is free, but all civilians will be approached to donate a silver-coin for the benefit of the soldier's comfort.<sup>87</sup>

Sydney Hakoah played some occasional games to boost morale for the war effort. Two matches 'Hakoah versus Our Soldiers' are recorded. Jewish soldiers, attached to the labour battalions, also played two games independently, against Canterbury.<sup>88</sup> At least one match was watched by 'a large number of spectators ... with lack of condition the main reason for Hakoah's defeat'.<sup>89</sup> Such matches demonstrated the patriotism of a Jewish club.

Sydney Hakoah has always proudly listed its foundation year as 1939, yet by the device of a monument it denies participation in competition in its formative years. The official view of the contemporary Hakoah Club, inscribed on a stone tablet in the club's foyer, is that the club's 'activities were suspended from 1939-1945.' Fisher and Morrison state that during the early war years 'Hakoah played football on a purely informal social basis'.<sup>90</sup> This is contrary to the available evidence, which shows that Hakoah competed in organised competitions during the seasons 1939, 1940, 1941 and for three months in 1942. Dukes refuted the view that Hakoah's activities were suspended during World War II. He stated that:

the inscription in the lobby of the present club gives misleading information: the club's activities were not suspended from 1939-1945, merely the NSW [sic] championship was. I played for Hakoah from 1939-1945. In that period I was president for some years. We played our games at Queen's Park, collecting modest contributions towards our expenses from the few spectators who bothered to turn up.<sup>91</sup>

The period from May 1939 to May 1942, represent the forgotten years of Sydney Hakoah because its activities have not been recorded until now. Why would the Sydney Hakoah Club deny its original football team was active during this period? Perhaps it is incomprehensible to some that a Jewish football team (consisting mostly of men who had escaped Vienna) was competing and holding annual balls while European Jewry was suffering and the Holocaust was beginning.

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<sup>87</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 22 May 1942.

<sup>88</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 22 May, 29 May and 26 June 1942.

<sup>89</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 26 June 1942.

<sup>90</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney 1938-1994*, Hakoah Club, Sydney, 1998.

## Conclusions

It is clear that Sydney Hakoah was a well-organised and well-performed amateur soccer club from 1938 to 1942. The club began when a group of young Jewish men gathered for casual games of football. Some of these players had been members or supporters of Hakoah Vienna and the others were familiar with that club's traditions.

By 1938 Jewish sport had been well organised in Sydney for some fifteen years. However, the sporting infrastructure did not address the expectations of the refugees. New clubs such as SJSC emerged with the blessing of the MSA, with those who founded them coming mainly from Austria and Germany. The club's activities from 1939 to 1942 have been neglected for reasons that are not clear.

The club was initially named SJSC, possibly to fit in with the MSA's idea of communal non-distinctiveness. However, the name was changed to Sydney Hakoah by July 1939 and may have been linked with the tour of Australia by the Jewish Palestine soccer team. The tour created a lot of interest in Jewish communities in Australia as the presence of the team offered a tangible link to the idea of a Jewish state in Palestine. Official functions for the team offered a site where communal leaders could meet with invited dignitaries and politicians from the wider community. This must have been important in the context of continuing negotiations over the status of Jewish refugees and immigrants from Europe. The Palestine team played a style of football modelled on the Austrian teams of the 1920s and 1930s, including Hakoah Vienna. The Zionist and Hakoah Vienna colours of blue and white were adopted by Sydney Hakoah and the club demonstrated that it was a 'community citizen' by instituting the successful annual Hakoah Ball.

The juxtaposition of the founding of Sydney Hakoah and the visit of the Palestine team brings into sharp focus many of the issues faced by the refugees who founded Hakoah, and their relationship to the Jewish community. In 1938 and 1939 a heated debate was being waged over how many refugees should be allowed into Australia and the effects such migration would have on employment and the economy, not fully

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<sup>91</sup> 'Death of Great Hakoah Pioneer', *Hakoah Star*, vol. 4, no. 10, November 1980.

recovered from the great depression. The refugees were not widely accepted in the Australian Jewish community. Many leaders thought that a refugee influx might threaten the community's stance of communal non-distinctiveness.

The presence in Sydney of European Jews, with different dress and language, brought some anti-Semitism to the fore. Because the refugees spoke mostly German they may have increased their visibility to Australians. It is significant that the new soccer club adopted the aggressive name of Hakoah, with its connotations of force and toughness. Sydney Hakoah did not play in a Jewish league, but in local leagues where the players' cultural differences were each week on display.

Sydney Hakoah was the child of its great Viennese forbear. Egon Pollak's much maligned Palestine team played the same short-passing, swift striking style as Hakoah Vienna. It is possible that the Sydney club chose to emulate the Palestine style, bringing them into conflict with the more robust long ball game offered in the local leagues.

Success in 1939 encouraged Hakoah to play in the Sydney and District second division in 1940. The club was out of its depth in this competition finishing last. In 1941 Sydney Hakoah returned to the Eastern Suburbs League and had a relatively successful season with Fritz Weiss a prolific scorer. The club began to build a sound financial base on the proceeds of two successful annual balls. However, by May 1942 the call-up of many of the club's members made it impossible for the team to compete and it withdrew from the league. Some members continued to play in army teams and a number of friendly games were organised to raise funds in aid of the war effort. The activities of the period 1938 to mid-1942 set the scene for the revival of the club in 1944 after a brief period of inactivity.

Figure 4.1 Sydney Hakoah at Rushcutters Bay Park in 1939. This is the earliest known photograph of a Sydney Hakoah team.



Figure 4.1 Sydney Hakoah at Rushcutters Bay Park in 1939. This is the earliest known photograph of a Sydney Hakoah team.



## Chapter Five

### Sydney Hakoah is revived

‘... our guiding principle, the bodily improvement of the Jewish youth ...’<sup>1</sup>

Sydney Hakoah was re-activated in 1944 after a two-year hiatus. By 1955 it had established itself as the leading soccer club in the Jewish community and one of the strongest in Sydney. To understand how and why this happened, this chapter will focus on the revival of the club in the latter years of World War II and examine its philosophical basis developed by its Viennese-born officials. It will explore the links with Hakoah Vienna and how they were activated to rejuvenate Sydney Hakoah. Having re-established the club, the Hakoah committee set about recruiting sports people particularly soccer players, because soccer became the club's flagship. Hakoah's rise to prominence also raised the issue of the club's relationship with other Jewish sporting bodies, in particular its battle with the Kadimah Progress Sports Club for control of Jewish soccer and for the support of the Sydney Jewish sporting public. A central issue to consider is how did the leaders of Sydney Hakoah defined the role of the club in Sydney's Jewish community.

Two important Hakoah members escaped Vienna and fled to Palestine after the Anschluss: the president Dr I H Körner and Arthur Barr who was chairman of the soccer section. The Hakoah name was already in use in Palestine. Bar Kochbah Hakoah had been established there in 1934 by Josef Spira and Paul Kestenbaum.<sup>2</sup> Körner and Barr were soon joined in Palestine by others from Vienna, and they eventually established a Hakoah Club in Tel Aviv. Körner soon became the organiser of a world-wide network of Hakoahns, primarily so that family members and friends could keep in touch. He also wanted to encourage and support the establishment of Hakoah clubs throughout the Jewish diaspora that would continue to serve Jewish interests in Palestine through sport. Hakoah members in exile supported this goal. In 1943 Körner wrote to L A Bund, a Hakoah Vienna member residing in Melbourne, outlining the condition of the Hakoah movement around the world and describing events in Palestine. Körner encouraged Bund to establish a Hakoah club in Australia. He provided Bund with a list of Australian-based Hakoahns and their addresses.<sup>3</sup> Bund did not

<sup>1</sup> H Klimt, quoting Max Nordau during his speech to the Hakoah 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner, Tarbut Club Sydney, 27 May 1944.

<sup>2</sup> A Hanek, 1909-1979, *Jahre Hakoah Wien*, Maccabi, Tel Aviv, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> I H Körner to L A Bund, 1 December 1943, H Klimt private papers, copies held by author. Ticher stated that Kestenbaum was the best player produced by Hakoah Berlin in the 19 30s.

proceed with this request because he considered himself too old and that his business was too important.

Bund suggested Körner contact Hans Klimt, who resided in Sydney though not included on Körner's list.<sup>4</sup> When Körner wrote to Klimt in March 1944 encouraging him to establish a 'snif' (branch) of Hakoah in Sydney he was unaware that clubs using the Hakoah name had existed in Melbourne since 1927 and in Sydney since 1939. Klimt, who had arrived in Sydney in July 1939, was aware of the existence of the Sydney Hakoah Club but had not become involved because of family and business concerns. Klimt contacted Sigi Dukes, an acquaintance from Hakoah in Vienna whom he knew was involved with the Hakoah soccer team in Sydney. The timing of Körner's contact with Klimt was no accident. Because the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hakoah Vienna was scheduled for 27 May 1944 Körner urged Klimt to organise a similar celebration in Sydney. Klimt and Dukes complied. The organisation of such a function offered the opportunity for Viennese refugees, especially members of Hakoah Vienna, to meet with Sydney Hakoah members.

The function was held in the Tarbuth Club at 333 George Street Sydney with 80 people attending. This venue was symbolic because it created links between Sydney and Vienna, sport and Zionism. The Tarbuth organisation had been founded in Sydney in 1940 by Viennese Zionists, in particular the veteran Austrian Zionist Paul Unger. Tarbuth played a central role in the cultural life of Jews in Sydney in the 1940s especially through its George Street premises.<sup>5</sup> However, Zionism had never been popular amongst Australian Jewry and Australia's most prominent Jewish citizen, Isaac Isaacs 'ridiculed the concept of a Jewish nationality and declared that to regard Palestine as home was a doctrine which "might as well have been taken as a paraphrase from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*."' <sup>6</sup> Some Australian Jews opposed Isaacs, including Julius Stone, Challis Professor of International Law and Jurisprudence at the University of Sydney. W D Rubenstein has stated that Stone was 'probably the most cogent and influential champion against Sir Isaac Isaacs's anti-Zionism during the

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After competing for Germany in the first International Maccabi Games in Tel Aviv in 1932, Kestenbaum moved to Palestine. He played in Palestine's first World Cup qualifiers against Egypt in 1934. M Ticher, 'Jews and Football in Berlin 1890-1933', p. 77.

<sup>4</sup> Hans Klimt, Interview, 1994.

<sup>5</sup> S Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora: Two Centuries of Jewish Settlement in Australia*, Brandler and Schlesinger, 2nd revised edition, Sydney, 1997, p. 303.

<sup>6</sup> M Blakeney, *Australia and the Jewish Refugees 1933-1948*, Croom Helm, Sydney, 1985, p. 289.

1940s'.<sup>7</sup> Stone, himself an immigrant Jew, published a pamphlet *Stand up and be Counted*,<sup>8</sup> which countered each of Isaacs' arguments and aroused a great deal of interest.<sup>9</sup> Refugees played an important role in advancing Zionism in Australia and forced the Jewish establishment to 'have some regard for the hitherto unrepresented non-Anglo-Australia groups in the community'.<sup>10</sup>

The 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner was an impressive occasion for the immigrant and local supporters of Sydney Hakoah. Klimt hosted the dinner making an emotional speech where he recounted the glorious history of Hakoah Vienna, though he also recounted anti-Semitism in Vienna:

Nazis or no Nazis there always was a good deal of anti-Semitism in Vienna and so these young enthusiastic boys had to play and win their games under continuous 'Hep Hep' shouting coming from the sympathisers of our opponents.<sup>11</sup>

He quoted Nordau's call that the 'guiding principle' would be '... the bodily improvement of the Jewish youth ...'. Klimt also referred to 'the hundreds of boys and girls who joined the various sections and out of those sportsmen and women who fulfilled records in every discipline'. He added that 'Hakoah achieved the eradication of the famous but untrue saying of the inferiority of Jews in the physical connection. We achieved triumph after triumph!'<sup>12</sup> Klimt appealed to the Viennese present to support Hakoah in Sydney (an acknowledgment that the club already existed) and to maintain contact with the mother club in Eretz Israel.

The link between sport and politics was echoed by the second speaker Dr Gustav Bock, a noted Zionist who became president of Sydney Hakoah at this time. Bock endorsed the spirit and ideals of Hakoah 'as created and developed by Dr Körner ... his aim [being], to alter Jewish boys and girls to a strong, healthy Jewish conscious youth'. He thanked Hakoah 'for everything they have given us in material, moral and personal values'. He urged those present to:

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<sup>7</sup> W D Rubenstein, *The Jews in Australia: A Thematic History, Volume Two, 1945 to the Present*, William Heinemann Australia, Melbourne, 1991, p. 314.

<sup>8</sup> J Stone, *Stand up and be Counted*, Sydney, 1944.

<sup>9</sup> H L Rubenstein, *Chosen: The Jews in Australia*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1987, p. 207.

<sup>10</sup> M Blakeney, *Australia and the Jewish Refugees 1933-1948*, p. 241.

<sup>11</sup> H Klimt, speech to Hakoah 35th Anniversary Dinner, Tarbuth Club Sydney, 27 May 1944, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> H Klimt, speech to Hakoah 35th Anniversary Dinner, p. 2.

unite and stand together and to work in the ranks of Hakoah Sydney [sic] for the ideals of the old Hakoah, namely for the Jewish commonwealth in Eretz Israel and for a strong healthy Jewish conscious community of (interested) loyal citizens everywhere in the world where Jews are living.<sup>13</sup>

Sigi Dukes was the final speaker on the evening. He stated that:

The activities of Hakoah Sydney, are restricted of course by the war, the biggest part of the members being in the forces doing their duties. Nevertheless Hakoah Sydney [was] and is proud of its link with Hakoah Eretz Israel and the sportive and cultural activities will be taken up immediately the situation permits it. The old spirit is still alive and sure to be maintained and developed.<sup>14</sup>

This event was a milestone in Sydney Hakoah's history. It brought together members of the pre-War Sydney Hakoah Club and Viennese refugees, including former members of Hakoah Vienna and other Europeans, who had not been previously involved in the club. Klimt's words linked 1909, 1944, Hakoah Vienna and Sydney Hakoah. Bock's manifesto for the new Sydney Hakoah set the club apart from previous Jewish sporting clubs in Australia. He initiated a lively debate between the club and the Jewish community that would shape its sporting, cultural and political life for the next 50 years.

From that time, Klimt, Dukes and other members began to reorganise Hakoah in Sydney. Financial membership was set at one guinea and membership cards were issued. Bock became president on the condition that Klimt become vice-president.<sup>15</sup> However, it was Klimt who ran the club during this period, eventually taking over as president in 1946 when Bock became seriously ill.

Within two months of the anniversary dinner Klimt furnished Körner in Palestine with a report on Sydney Hakoah which noted a telegraphic transfer of funds to Palestine on 13 June 1944.<sup>16</sup> This began a tradition of the Sydney Hakoah Club providing funds for the Jewish homeland, particularly at times of crisis. Klimt noted that prominent Zionists had attended the anniversary dinner including Hans Charmatz, Paul Ungar, S Advocat, E Weissmann and Dr

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<sup>13</sup> G Bock, in H Klimt, 'Notes for press from Hakoah 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner'.

<sup>14</sup> S Dukes, in H Klimt, 'Notes for press from Hakoah 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner'.

<sup>15</sup> H Klimt, Interview, 1994.

<sup>16</sup> H Klimt to Dr I H Körner, 10 July 1944, p. 1.

Norbert Seif. He was also pleased to report that former Viennese members from a variety of sports had attended including Josef Lachs (fencing), Bela Revey (rowing), Dr Revey, Bruno and Karl Spira, Richard and Trude Raubitschek (hiking) and Fritz Perger (field hockey).<sup>17</sup>

One of the aims of Hakoah in Sydney was to imitate the Viennese model and become a multi-sports club. It was impossible to reinstate soccer in 1944 because many of the potential players were still on war service. However, it was possible to put up a table tennis club immediately.<sup>18</sup> This section of Sydney Hakoah later became very successful. It was trained by former Hungarian and world champion Miklos Szabados. In the summer of 1944-45 the Hakoah Swimming Club, which used the Redleaf Pool in Double Bay, promoted its activities in the Jewish press.

The activities of Sydney Hakoah were viewed with alarm by the MSU, an incursion into its domain — the organisation of sport in the Jewish community. The MSU claimed in 1944 that it was 'the only club of its kind in Sydney ... catering for all members of the Jewish community, no matter their politics, their origin ...'<sup>19</sup>

Many Jews viewed Hakoah with suspicion because of its links with Hakoah Vienna. Fisher and Morrison noted that:

the fact that many (members of Hakoah) supported the Zionist ideal was reason enough at that time for other sections of the community to believe that there was a political motive behind Hakoah's establishment.<sup>20</sup>

Many in the Anglo-Australian Jewish community viewed the Hakoah approach as disloyal to the Empire. Palestine was a British mandate and the breakaway right wing Zionist guerilla group Irgun Zvai Leumi was attacking British forces there.

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<sup>17</sup> Fritz Perger was later selected to represent New South Wales in ice hockey, *Sydney Jewish News*, 30 August 1946.

<sup>18</sup> I can find no other evidence of the table tennis section until July 1945 when the following notice appeared: 'Table Tennis — the newly inaugurated section had their first meeting at the Maccabi Hall last Thursday night and the event proved very successful. There are four tables available'. *Sydney Jewish News*, 13 July 1945.

<sup>19</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 25.

<sup>20</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 25

Details of Sydney Hakoah appeared in the Jewish press from early 1945. It published the agenda for the AGM to be held at the Tarbuth Club on 20 February.<sup>21</sup> While the minutes of this meeting have been lost, the agenda included a report by the treasurer and auditor, demonstrating that the club had a formal structure and funds to be audited. Just days after the Hakoah AGM, the MSU retaliated by suggesting that it was 'in no way a political body', instead its aims were the 'uniting and catering for all sections of the Jewish community'. Maccabi was involved in the organisation of the 'New South Wales Jewish Tennis Championships'.<sup>22</sup> It is ironic that this flagship Maccabi event, which a Sydney Hakoah team entered and won, saw the emergence of Hakoah's tennis section as the strongest Jewish tennis club.

A public debate between the MSU and Hakoah continued until March, when Hakoah spelt out its role in an article entitled 'Why Sports Club Hakoah?':

The Jewish Sports Club Hakoah in Sydney is a reality. Its activities consist of swimming, tennis, and soccer. At this stage it seems important to state the reasons for commencing a Jewish sports club. The reasons are that in Sydney, too, there are Jewish people who want to do sports with their Jewish friends. This refers in particular to the youth. But we want to give our youth the possibility to train, in Jewish surroundings so that they can participate in competitions with Australian youth. As a sports club we have no political attitude, and every Jew is welcome.<sup>23</sup>

This statement represents a public shift from the trenchant Zionism of the 1944 anniversary dinner. However, it is a telling statement because it encapsulates the Hakoah Vienna approach to sport, that the Jewish community should train its youth to be strong and competitive even against non-Jews. The club believed that Jewish vigour could only have a meaning when tested against others. Maccabi had always favoured intramural sport that encouraged social intercourse within the community, rather than sport outside the community that trumpeted Jewish identity. While Sydney Hakoah catered for internal competitions in various sports, the idea of competing outside the Jewish community was one of its guiding principles. It was characteristic of the Viennese approach, and for this reason alone it was natural that soccer would become the dominant sport as it had in Vienna.

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<sup>21</sup>*Sydney Jewish News*, 2 February 1945.

<sup>22</sup>*Sydney Jewish News*, 23 February 1945.

<sup>23</sup>*Sydney Jewish News*, 16 March 1945.

By April 1945 the soccer team had resumed playing. Hakoah also had active sections in bridge, tennis and table tennis. A gymnastics section was also proposed. Hakoah continued to promote itself:

Our membership is increasing daily. Hakoah is becoming popular amongst the Sydney Jewish community, because it offers a field of activity hitherto not fully catered for. You can meet your fellow members socially each Monday at the Tarbuth Home, 333 George Street ... You can enjoy your games and obtain expert advice in almost every field of sport ... this is your Jewish Sports Club.<sup>24</sup>

While such promotion may appear innocuous, it challenged the MSU which had nurtured sport in the community since the 1920s. The reference to the 'Tarbuth Home' indicated the political affiliations of Hakoah.

Hakoah, however, maintained its political agenda in public statements in late April 1945. While Maccabi was advertising a 'Lag Bomer'<sup>25</sup> dance to be held at History House on 1 May,<sup>26</sup> Hakoah was organising a public meeting to discuss and commemorate 'The Rising of the Polish Ghetto'. It is ironic that the Hakoah meeting was held at the Maccabean Hall, the headquarters of the MSU. The meeting was publicised in the following manner:

We stress the importance of this meeting, it is devised to inform all Jews of the heroic fight of Warsaw Jewry who decided that their sufferings would not go on. They stood gallantly against overwhelming odds and only succumbed to tanks, flame throwers, and air attacks, against their small number of light weapons. In the judgements of future generations this rising will have an equal place of honour with that of the Maccabees.<sup>27</sup>

In this statement the Sydney Hakoah club recognised the heroism and sacrifice of the Warsaw insurgents. The reference to the Maccabees provided both an historical link and a link to the Jewish sports movement. The Hakoah Club

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<sup>24</sup>*Hebrew Standard*, 17 May 1945.

<sup>25</sup>Lag B'omer: The *Omer* refers to the 49 day period of semi-mourning between the festivals of *Pesach* and *Shavuot*; however, *Lag B'omer*, the thirty-third day is celebrated as a festival commemorating the occasion during the second century AD on which a plague ended among the disciples of the renowned scholar and teacher Rabbi Akiva. W D Rubenstein, *Judaism in Australia*, AGSP, Canberra, 1995, p. 54.

<sup>26</sup>*Sydney Jewish News*, 27 April 1945.

<sup>27</sup>*Sydney Jewish News*, 27 April 1945.

clearly identified itself as a supporter of Jewish militancy. Hakoah used a sports club to conduct a broader ideological campaign.

Tuesday night became Hakoah 'Club Night' at the Tarbuth and it coincided with the Tarbuth's own social night. These meetings enabled Zionists within the club to keep abreast of developments in Europe, Palestine and in the Zionist movement, and to proselytise new members. Tarbuth at this time was active in raising money for the war effort and on three occasions it won pennants from the *National Group Organiser for Victory War Loans* for raising the most money by Sydney metropolitan clubs.<sup>28</sup> Hakoah and Tarbuth, two clubs whose drive came from refugees and whose philosophies were steeped in Jewish activism of early twentieth century Vienna, had become important players in the Jewish community in a short time. Hakoah was part of a new direction of Australian Jewry that began in the 1930s. Rutland noted this development:

The established, relatively assimilated leadership emanating from the synagogues was beginning to lose its dominant position as newcomers gained positions of power. A new more democratic style of leadership, with a completely different attitude to the position of the Jew in society, evolved.<sup>29</sup>

Throughout 1945, Sydney Hakoah attempted to promote its sporting and political role among Sydney Jewry. Maccabi by contrast catered more for Jewish youth by organising plays, music reviews, debates and card nights for adults. Apart from looking forward to the re-establishment of the annual Interstate sporting Carnivals, its only involvement in sport was now in tennis, which it conducted at the Hardy Street courts in Bondi. The Jewish sporting Carnivals were scheduled to re-convene in Melbourne at Christmas that year. At the Maccabi AGM held on 28 August 1945 the retiring president E de Mesquita stated:

The Maccabi was the only Jewish youth organisation in Sydney that was entirely non-political and catered for every taste. One of its main aims was to bring the Jewish youth of Sydney together, to give cultural, educational, social, dramatic and sporting entertainment in an entirely Jewish atmosphere.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 15 June 1945.

<sup>29</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora: Two Centuries of Jewish Settlement in Australia*, second revised edition, p. 223.

<sup>30</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 7 September 1945.



Maccabi at this time was a sporting manifestation of the old Anglo-Australian Jewry. Its headquarters were at the Jewish War Memorial, itself a symbol of loyalty to King and Empire. This organisation, with the YMHA, had been at the centre of youth, social, sporting and cultural activities in Sydney since the 1920s. The arrival of Hakoah, Tarbuth and B'nai Brith from 1944, signalled a sea change that was taking place among Jews.<sup>31</sup> By 1955 the YMHA was defunct and the Maccabi organisation had transformed itself.

In the meantime members of Hakoah, Maccabi, YMHA and other community groups came together in December 1945 to organise the Interstate sporting visit to Melbourne. This sports Carnival was hastily conceived and organised. However, the resumption of the Interstate Carnival after a five-year hiatus (see below) was seen as important for community morale given the constant news of horror and death camps in Europe.

### **Hakoah soccer resumes**

While the reformed Sydney Hakoah Club catered for various sports, such as swimming, tennis and table tennis, the creation of a viable soccer section — that would become the flagship of the organisation (as in Vienna) — remained the ambition. Every effort was made to rebuild the team by recruiting new players, starting a junior club and attempting to improve the quality of soccer.

Klimt noted that many of the Viennese Hakoahns and other European refugees and immigrants interested in Hakoah were too old to play competitive soccer.<sup>32</sup> They concentrated instead on tennis for their exercise. However, their organisational and business skill was useful both for the tennis and soccer clubs.

Hakoah reappeared on the soccer field in a practice match on 15 April 1945 against Cleveland United at Queens Park, where it was reported that most

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<sup>31</sup> B'nai Brith, 'Sons of the Covenant'. A Jewish community organisation first founded in 1843 in the USA. 'B'nai Brith has taken upon itself the mission of uniting Israelites in the work of promoting their high-est interests and those of humanity; of developing and elevating the mental and moral character of the people of our faith; of inculcating the purest principles of philanthropy, honor, and patriotism; of supporting science and art; alleviating the wants of the victims of persecution; providing for, protecting, and assisting the widow and orphan on the broadest principles of humanity, E. E. Grusd 'Preamble to the B'nai Brith Constitution' -- *B'NAI B'RITH: The Story of a Covenant*, Appleton-Century/Affiliate of Meredith Press, 1966, New York, p. 20.

players were 'not in good nick'.<sup>33</sup> In another warm up game played against Coogee on the 28 April Hakoah won 8-2.<sup>34</sup> The following week the team lost to Aberdeen 3-2, finishing the game with nine players (following two injuries).<sup>35</sup> The first competition match against Coogee was lost 3-2 when the club again had trouble fielding a team. Many players who were still enlisted in labour battalions found it difficult to obtain leave to play soccer.<sup>36</sup> When Hakoah played the Second Australian Employment Company (2nd AEC) late in May, the club fielded a depleted team. Charlie May from the pre-war Hakoah played in that match along with younger players George Shipp and Harry Blood. The army team was considered too rough by Hakoah. The Jewish press stated that:

our opponents deserved to win and they could have achieved this without the showing of uncouthness and a lack of discipline; their display of fairness requires severe criticism. Our team showed that they were all good sportsmen and after all, this is what matters most in our eyes.<sup>37</sup>

The presence of many German-speaking players in the Hakoah team may have been the cause of the rough-house tactics employed by the 2nd AEC. In the return match with 2nd AEC the Eastern Suburbs Association appointed one of its 'strictest referees' and the game was well controlled. George Weiss saved two penalty kicks and Hakoah were victorious 6-2.<sup>38</sup>

It took some time for Hakoah to form a cohesive team and worthwhile results. Many of the players of the 1939 to 1942 teams were now too old and some of the younger players such as George Shipp were inexperienced. Table 5.1 shows that club performed inconsistently.

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<sup>32</sup> H Klimt, Interview, 1994.

<sup>33</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 20 April 1945.

<sup>34</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 4 May 1945.

<sup>35</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 11 May 1945.

<sup>36</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 18 May, 1945.

<sup>37</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 1 June 1945.

<sup>38</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, 21 July 1945.

Table 5.1 Fixtures of Hakoah Soccer Club, Eastern Suburbs Soccer Association 1945.

Date	Opponent	Score	Scorers
14 April	Cleveland United*	Unknown	Unknown
28 April	Coogee*	8-2	Unknown
5 May	Aberdeen <sup>39</sup>	2-3	Unknown
12 May	Coogee	2-3	Unknown
19 May	Aberdeen II	7-3	Unknown
26 May	2nd AEC.	3-5	Unknown
2 June	Aberdeen	0-0	Nil
9 June	Rose Bay	5-1	Weiss (2), Baker, Eibuschuetz, Steel
16 June	2nd AEC	6-2	Unknown
23 June	Aberdeen	1-4	Unknown
30 June	Rose Bay	1-6	Unknown
7 July	2nd AEC	6-2	Unknown
14 July	2nd AEC	forfeit	Nil

\* non-competition practice games.

After the forfeit against 2nd AEC no further matches were reported. There were appeals in the press for younger players and a friendly match was organised against a youth team from the Habonim group in an effort to persuade some of their junior players to play for Hakoah. By mid-August it was reported the soccer section was 'undergoing a re-organisation and rejuvenation'. However, efforts to attract youth at this time were largely unsuccessful.<sup>40</sup>

### Hakoah soccer 1946-1950

From 1946 to 1950 Sydney Hakoah Soccer Club laid the foundations of its future success. During the summer of 1945-46, the club continued to operate its tennis, table tennis and swimming sections. However, it redoubled its efforts to create a successful soccer team. Advertisements were placed regularly in the local Jewish press to recruit players.<sup>41</sup> At the AGM early in 1946 it was reported that the club had achieved success in tennis and table tennis in 1945. Gustav Bock was re-elected as president, though he was largely a figure-head.

<sup>39</sup> Fisher and Morrison claim that Hakoah won its first competition match 7-3 against Aberdeen. This is not consistent with match reports. The *Sydney Jewish News* on 18 May 1945 clearly stated 'Hakoah lost its first competition game against Coogee 2-3. We were unable to field a full team ...'. See Fisher and Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 26.

<sup>40</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 17 August 1945.

<sup>41</sup> *Hebrew Standard*, February 1945.

Hans Klimt was named acting president. With Sigi Dukes and Karl Raymond as vice president and treasurer respectively, the executive remained firmly in the hands of the Viennese born immigrants, thereby ensuring continuity. Playing in the Eastern Suburbs Soccer Association, Hakoah had a successful season, finishing second by a point in the premiership to South Sydney. New players such as Kurt Hirsch, David Thau, B Friedman, G Bluth, W Fisher and A Stricker rejuvenated a team that had depended on older players, such as Charlie May. The Jewish press reported Hakoah played before 'large numbers of spectators'<sup>42</sup> although crowd statistics were not reported.

Towards the end of the season Hakoah withdrew from a planned knockout tournament, accusing the Eastern Suburbs Association of mismanagement.<sup>43</sup> In the coming years Hakoah would become more outspoken against various governing bodies when it considered its interests to be at risk.

### **Hakoah and the revival of the Maccabi sports Carnival**

At the outbreak of war in 1939, and at a time when interest in sport in the Jewish community was at a high due to the Palestine soccer tour, it had been decided to cancel the annual Interstate sports Carnival, scheduled for Perth over the Christmas holiday period. The decision to abandon the Carnival until after the war was taken by the Maccabean League of Western Australia, in consultation with their counterparts in New South Wales and Victoria, the three bodies that made up the Judean Sports Council (JSC).<sup>44</sup> After the cancellation of the Carnival, the JSC held a one-day conference on 5 January 1940, in Perth to discuss the future of the Carnivals and the council itself. The conference was chaired by Mendal Mendalawitz, senior president of the Maccabean League and the delegates were Beck Goldberg (New South Wales), Nate Zusman (WA) and Henry Friedman and Mory Miller (Vic.). The following motions were carried:

1. That this conference is of the opinion that it is unwise to conduct Carnivals during the continuation of the war.
2. That for the year 1940, the headquarters of the JSC will be in Melbourne.
3. That the venue for the next Carnival be left for determination by correspondence between the states.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup>Sydney Jewish News, 24 May 1946.

<sup>43</sup>Sydney Jewish News, 6 September 1946.

<sup>44</sup>B Kino, *The Carnivals*, p. 89.

While some Jewish community sport continued around Australia between 1940 and 1945, the Carnivals were not resumed. In September 1945, Les Abrahams president of the Judean League of Victoria and Manual Gelman, soon to be president of AJAX sporting club, decided to contact Jewish sporting bodies in the other states with a view to holding the Carnival during the Christmas period.<sup>46</sup> A Carnival Committee was quickly formed under the chairmanship of Gelman. Since five years had elapsed since the last Maccabi Carnival, the home state of Victoria reported that 'considerable organisational experience has been lost. In addition there is ... no money, no grounds and no equipment. Yet in ten weeks money has been raised to buy sports equipment and to obtain use of grounds.'<sup>47</sup>

The proposed Interstate Carnival spurred the Sydney Jewish sporting community to action. In October 1945, the MSU in Sydney announced that the Carnival would take place over the Christmas holidays.<sup>48</sup> Hakoah soon became involved, stating that 'our club has to organise together with other Jewish organisations the New South Wales teams for soccer, swimming, table tennis and tennis'.<sup>49</sup> This represented a thawing in relations between the MSU and Hakoah, with the latter body Hakoah focusing its efforts on the organisation of the soccer team. Hakoah ran a number of advertisements to recruit players for the trip. It is perhaps a measure of Hakoah's influence at this time that a proposal to include a soccer fixture was successful, because soccer had never previously been played at the Carnival.

Hakoah called a public meeting at the Maccabean Hall on 12 November to organise the Carnival soccer team and other sections of the club to ensure a strong Hakoah representation in the New South Wales team. After a series of trials, 74 athletes and four officials were selected to compete in nine sports and debating. The team's management consisted of Mr and Mrs Syd Einfeld, Hans Vidor, president of the YMHA, and a chaperone Miss H Berman. Harry Cohen, a former Australian bantamweight champion was chosen manager of the boxing team. Cohen had been chosen on the Australian team for the 1936 Berlin

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<sup>45</sup> *Australian Jewish Herald*, 19 October 1939.

<sup>46</sup> B Kino, *The Carnivals*, p. 89.

<sup>47</sup> B Kino, *The Carnivals*, p. 90.

<sup>48</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 19 October 1945.

<sup>49</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 26 October 1945.

Olympic Games, but had declined to go because he had turned professional three weeks before his selection.<sup>50</sup>

Miklos Szabados, former multiple world table tennis champion, and Mark Dankin, three-time New South Wales table tennis champion, were also team members.<sup>51</sup> Szabados and Dankin, who were involved with the Sydney Hakoah Club, were scheduled to play an exhibition match billed 'Former World Champion to give Exhibition' on 27 December at the Communal Hall in Melbourne.<sup>52</sup> Dorly Shipp, (sister of George Shipp) and a future Australian table tennis champion, was also on the team. At least six Hakoah players were selected for the New South Wales soccer team; Willy Gross, Charlie May, Fritz Weiss, George Shipp, and H Price. Gross, May and Weiss had been Hakoah regulars since 1939. Sam Pisam, who had acted as interpreter for Hakoah at Soccer Association meetings between 1939-1942, was a member of the debating team. Hakoah members dominated the tennis team with Karl Raymond, Ray Newton and David Greenstein. Hakoah also had members on the swimming team.

The involvement of Hakoah was a new element in the selection of Carnival teams and showed that profound changes had taken place in the Jewish community's sports governance since the late 1930s. Previously everything had centred around the MSU and the Jewish War Memorial. Immigrants, it appeared, preferred to make use of Hakoah rather than relying on the old Anglo-Australian structures.

In retrospect it was foolhardy to attempt to organise the Carnival at such short notice and when the war had just ended. Three days before the Carnival was due to begin, it was cancelled. Because of war-time fuel restrictions (especially on coal) travelling was difficult. Last minute restrictions on train travel before Christmas left the Interstate teams stranded and the Carnival had to be abandoned. On 21 December, the day that New South Wales were scheduled to arrive in Melbourne, Les Abrahams commented on the cancellation of the Carnival:

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<sup>50</sup> See A Hughes, 'Harry Cohen, Australian Jewry and the 1936 Berlin Olympics', in K Wamsley et al (eds.), *Bridging Three Centuries: Intellectual Crossroads and the Modern Olympic Movement*, International Centre for Olympic Studies, University of Western Ontario, London Ontario, 2000, pp. 215-225.

<sup>51</sup> Szabados was inducted into the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in 1987. See <http://www.jewishsports.net/home.html>

Notwithstanding the cancellation of the Carnival and the large financial loss sustained by the Judean League, the experience gained in organising by the young people forming the committees will prove invaluable when the Carnival is held in Victoria next year.<sup>53</sup>

In August 1946, the MSU broke away from its parent body, the Jewish War Memorial, and re-formed as the Jewish Amateur Sports Association of New South Wales (JASA NSW). According to Kino the War Memorial supported this move as it saw the need to restructure Jewish sport because 'sport was booming and many independent clubs were being formed'.<sup>54</sup> This was a response to the presence of the European Jews, the growth of Hakoah and the likely arrival of more Jews as the war drew to a close. JASA NSW quickly established itself as the governing body of sport in the Sydney Jewish community.

By December 1946 plans were under way for the Interstate Carnival to be held in Melbourne over the Christmas period. With JASA NSW having asserted its authority over Sydney's involvement in the Carnival, Hakoah had no role in its organisation or in the recruitment of athletes. Few Hakoah representatives were selected to the teams, but there were some notable inclusions: Karl Raymond in tennis and Dorly Shipp in swimming (her second sport). New South Wales did not send a soccer team, because it was only an exhibition sport. There was no table tennis on the program. The absence of these two sports, in which Hakoah was very active, significantly reduced the involvement of its members.

The *Sydney Jewish News* praised the revival of the Carnival after so many years:

... probably few in the community will remember or know them. The newcomers certainly would not, and many of the younger generation who grew up during the war years. One of the great achievements of these Carnivals has been the cementing of bonds between the Jewish communities of the various states. The billeting of visitors has always made for an increase in friendship, and the widest communal interest should be evinced in this revival.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 21 December 1945.

<sup>53</sup> *Australian Jewish News*, 21 December 1945.

<sup>54</sup> B Kino, *The Carnivals*, p. 91.

<sup>55</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 27 December 1946. By the time this edition had been released the Carnival had been cancelled.

The 1946-47 Carnival proved a success, attracting record crowds and teams from Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland. The visiting teams were feted by the Melbourne Jewish community and welcomed by its most senior member Maurice Ashkanazi. Ashkanazi was president of the Judean League, president of the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies and later president or senior president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (EJAC) from 1948 to 1970. A barrister, Ashkanazi was both at the forefront of Jewish affairs and a key figure in the Jewish community's relations with the Federal Government.<sup>56</sup> The Carnival received extensive coverage in the Jewish press. This was the first time Queensland had sent a delegation to the Games and the state was represented at the Australian Judean Sports Council (AJSC) that was held at Monash House on 25 December when important decisions regarding the conduct of sport in the Jewish community were taken. The AJSC recognised the Maccabean Youth Club of Western Australia as the successor to the Maccabean League of Western Australia. The Judean Sports Club was recognised as the governing body in Queensland.

Not everyone in the Jewish community was entirely happy with the conduct of the Carnival or its future. An unknown author in the *Zionist* stated that while 'the festival of Jewish youth, a manifestation of its cheerful mood and sportive spirit' was to be saluted, the Games were marred by 'a sense of disillusion' from the Zionist perspective. While the 'corpus sanem' was demonstrated admirably, the 'mens sana' was 'ostentatiously removed' from the scene and became invisible. The author added:

Jewish youth of Australia assembled in Melbourne at the eve of 1947, demonstrated all kinds of bodily exercises, displayed technical skill and flashes of humour in the art of debating — but one thing was absent both from their mind and heart. The fate of Israel, the great catastrophe in its history which these years have witnessed, the extermination of six million Jews in Europe, more than one third of the Jewish nation, and finally the historic drama which envelops all our life now in a heroic struggle for national survival — all that was removed from the scene of festivities in order not to mar their gaiety.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> S Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, 2nd revised edition, pp. 332-38.

<sup>57</sup> 'Interstate Jewish Sports Carnival', *The Zionist*, vol. iv, no. 4/5, December 1946 — January 1947, p. 3.



There was extended debate on the venue for the fifteenth Carnival, before Sydney was selected, so that the JASA NSW 'could consolidate their organisation',<sup>58</sup> and stake its claim for leadership of Jewish sport in New South Wales. Two important decisions were made about the Carnival which affected Hakoah in particular. It was decided to include table tennis but to exclude soccer from future Carnivals.<sup>59</sup>

### **Kadimah Progress — A Rival for Hakoah**

In March 1948 while still a university student, George Keen founded the Progress Sports Club as a social, sporting and cultural club for young Jewish adults. Keen was its president for 25 years.<sup>60</sup> Membership of the new club was open only to Jews.<sup>61</sup> From 1955 the name Kadimah was added to the club's title when a greater emphasis was placed on social activities.<sup>62</sup> The name *Kadimah* was taken from the old Viennese students club *Akademischer Verein Kadimah* which had been established by Jewish students at the University of Vienna in 1882, in reaction to the Russian pogroms. It was the first Jewish nationalist student organisation in western Europe. The name, suggested by the writer Peres Smolensky, had two meanings: 'Eastward against assimilation and for national work and forward against orthodoxy and for progress'.<sup>63</sup> Keen felt there was room for another Jewish sporting and cultural organisation in Sydney. Klimt claimed that Keen formed Progress because he was disgruntled with Hakoah, having tried unsuccessfully to play for the club. Klimt stated that:

... he [Keen] founds his Kadimah and tries to make an opposition but it was negligible. Hakoah was too powerful in these days through the influence of very wealthy people of Hungarian origin. He was very ambitious but he didn't succeed much.<sup>64</sup>

Despite Klimt's dismissal of Keen and his organisation, the battle for Jewish soccer supremacy, the loyalty of the community and approval by the hierarchy was played out in the Jewish press from the founding of Progress until 1960 when the club ceased its soccer activities. This conflict was reminiscent of the

<sup>58</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 10 January 1947.

<sup>59</sup> B Kino, *The Carnivals*, p. 100.

<sup>60</sup> George Keen, Interview, 1997.

<sup>61</sup> Constitution of Kadimah Progress Club 1948.

<sup>62</sup> George Keen, Interview, 1997.

<sup>63</sup> J H Schoeps, 'Modern Heirs of the Maccabees: The Beginning of the Vienna Kadimah 1882-1897', in *Leo Bock Year Book*, XXVII, 1982, p. 156.

<sup>64</sup> Hans Klimt, Interview, 1994.

public debate between Hakoah and the MSU. The debate focused on soccer, the Jewish membership of teams, which club best represented the Jewish community and which club should represent Sydney in representative matches against Melbourne.

After being founded in 1948, Progress fielded teams in soccer and cricket. It won the Eastern Suburbs Soccer Association Premiership in 1949. It was co-premier of the Jewish cricket competition in 1949-50.

Hakoah hosted an Interstate match against Melbourne Hakoah in 1949. Keen insisted that Melbourne had initially agreed to play Progress and accused Sydney Hakoah of cancelling the arrangement. Both Melbourne and Sydney Hakoah denied this strenuously. Progress believed it had organised the match and accepted the costs.<sup>65</sup>

By 1951 Progress was offering a range of social and sporting activities: basketball for men and women, boxing, cricket, soccer, table tennis and tennis. The club also held regular dances at the Bondi Esplanade, picnics, house parties and an annual ball which raised funds for the Jewish Hospital.<sup>66</sup> In 1952 Progress added athletics, rugby league and wrestling to its program.<sup>67</sup> The provision of cricket and rugby league (for the first time in the community since 1927) suggested that the club had a more Anglo-Australian profile than Hakoah.

Hakoah and Progress were at loggerheads during the 1950s. At one point in the early 1950s Progress delegate to JASA, Nahum Opit, accused Hakoah of offering to pay players. Hakoah denied this defending its amateur status. When queried in 1994 about Hakoah's amateur status in the early 1950s Klimt stated:

Hakoah was professional in the later 1950s. We were quite poor when I was in charge. We collected 2/- from each player because we had to pay for use of the ground and we had to give the referee a fee. The two shillings did not cover the expenses of a game, and let's face it, I or another official put a few shillings in. I remember that some people were not well off and when I collected I wanted to dodge them, but they would run after me to pay. They were very fine boys and I didn't want to take money from them.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 30.

<sup>66</sup> *Progress Sports Club Programme for 1951*, Sydney, 1951.

<sup>67</sup> *Progress Sports Club Programme for 1951*, Sydney, 1952.

However, Kadimah officials continued to question Hakoah's integrity on the issue of professionalism. Despite Klimt's 1994 statement, which also appeared to be at odds with his earlier one that Hakoah was supported by wealthy Hungarian Jews in the 1950s, other evidence suggests Sydney Hakoah was paying players from the early 1950s. Likewise Peter Nash who made his Hakoah debut in 1951 stated in 1997 that in the early 1950s Hakoah first team players were on 'about eighteen shillings per week'.<sup>69</sup> In March 1955 Keen's claim at the Kadimah Progress AGM that Hakoah had offered a number of Progress players money to switch clubs for the forthcoming season was reported in the *Jewish Times*.<sup>70</sup> Hakoah continued to deny professionalism but *Soccer Weekly News* reported in May 1956 that:

There can't be many clubs in New South Wales who look after their players better than Hakoah ... first of all Hakoah boasts two expert coaches — Billy Walsh, ex Sunderland star; and Bill Murphy, Australian international who learned his soccer in Scotland. Then, the boys are looked after physically with an expert masseur-physiotherapist on deck at training and at matches ... there is an honorary doctor. Insurance cover is generous too. Any player who loses time from work due to football injury collects up to £15 per week — plus all medical costs. The committee believes in looking after the lads.<sup>71</sup>

It is doubtful that career professionals such as Billy Walsh and Bill Murphy were playing for nothing.

Another area of disagreement between the clubs was the Jewish content and character of teams. At a Jewish sports day in July 1950 Progress fielded two non-Jewish players in a match against Hakoah though Progress later claimed this had occurred unwittingly. Progress was constantly forced to confront the issue of the Jewish content of its own soccer team throughout the 1950s, because Keen consistently criticised Hakoah for its diminishing use of Jewish players. Progress won the Metropolitan League premiership undefeated in 1953, yet Keen was moved to complain the team had received 'practically no support from the local Jewish sporting community'. He stated that:

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<sup>68</sup>Hans Klimt, Interview, 1994.

<sup>69</sup>Peter Nash, Interview, 1997.

<sup>70</sup>*Jewish Times*, 11 March 1955.

<sup>71</sup>*Soccer Weekly News*, 12 May 1956.

Numerous members of the Jewish sporting community have often criticised Progress for admitting non-Jewish soccer players to their teams and stated they would not support a team which was not entirely Jewish. On the other hand several Jewish soccer followers ... have condemned the Progress selectors who have in several matches given preference to Jewish players over their non-Jewish team mates of superior skill.<sup>72</sup>

Despite Keen's continued criticism of Hakoah's practices, his Progress club was forced on many occasions to field non-Jewish players until public pressure, through letters to the editor and media criticism forced him to declare that Progress would 'eliminate non-Jewish players from the team for all future games'.<sup>73</sup>

In 1956-57 the attitude of the Progress Club to Sydney Hakoah continued to be an ambiguous one. Keen claimed to have engineered the annual Jewish inter-city matches between Melbourne and Sydney in order to 'revive the interest in Jewish soccer in Sydney, which has been on the decline in recent years'.<sup>74</sup> This claim was unfounded. Hakoah's soccer status had progressively advanced and its matches attracted good crowds. Interstate games had been played sporadically since the 1920s and had been resumed in the late 1940s, so Keen was hardly a pioneer in this respect. However, together with Sam Rubenstein from Maccabi Melbourne, it appears that Keen was responsible for setting up the Jewish National Fund (JNF) Cup. The first match under the auspices of the JNF was played in Melbourne in 1956. Watched by over 1 000 spectators Kadimah, representing Sydney, won 4-2.

The selection of the Kadimah Progress team to represent Sydney in Melbourne caused great debate among Sydney Jews. A letter to the editor of the *Sydney Jewish News* praised Progress for its aim of wanting to provide an 'all Jewish soccer team, especially as for the time being Hakoah does not fulfil that function', but claimed that Progress had 'deceived Melbourne'.<sup>75</sup> Progress had not fielded a team in a Sydney competition in 1956 and the team proposed for Melbourne contained a mixture of Hakoah and Sydney Austral players including Alan Levinson, Bernie Jacoby, and Walter Pisk. While the representative team contained some quality players many equally able or

<sup>72</sup>George Keen, *Australian Jewish Times*, 5 February 1954.

<sup>73</sup>*Australian Jewish Times*, 24 June 1955.

<sup>74</sup>*Kadimah Progress v Maccabi Interstate Soccer Match Programme*, Kadimah Progress Sports Club, Sydney, 1957.

<sup>75</sup>*Sydney Jewish News*, 28 September 1956.

superior players were left out. Many believed that the team was not truly representative of Sydney or New South Wales and politics dictated the team selection.

The 1957 JNF Cup was played in Sydney at Mona Park, home of Auburn Soccer Club. Playing at Auburn in the far western suburbs was not ideal, because the bulk of the Jewish community lived in the eastern suburbs, the northern suburbs or inner west. Keen used this cup to further undermine Hakoah. He stated that the match had originally been set down for the eastern suburbs' E S Marks Field in Moore Park, which was a convenient venue for the majority of Sydney's Jewish community. Keen claimed that Hakoah had threatened to play its scheduled state league fixture against Sydney Austral in opposition to the JNF Cup unless Progress gave up use of the Marks Field. He also argued that Hakoah threatened to ban its players from representing Progress in the JNF CUP. Keen directly questioned Hakoah's rationale adding that : 'We of Kadimah have no ambition to reach the first division. Our main objective is to foster Jewish soccer in this city. We firmly believe the talent is here to form a strong all Jewish club'.<sup>76</sup> Perhaps Keen had a personal grudge against Hakoah, as Klimt hinted. While he continued to publicly criticise Hakoah, Keen nonetheless selected Hakoah players who played a vital role in Sydney's success in Melbourne the 1956 JNF Cup in Melbourne and again in Sydney in 1957 when it won 4-1 win. The 1957 Sydney JNF team was captained by Sydney Hakoah captain Bernie Jacoby and contained popular Hakoah player Alan Levinson.

Despite the public brawl between Hakoah and Kadimah Progress, the inter-city game was an important affair in the Jewish sporting calender in 1957, and the players were presented to the Consul of Israel, Z Dover, before the game. The JNF Cup was contested once more in 1959 when a Kadimah Progress team defeated Melbourne Maccabi 6-2 in Melbourne.

Fisher and Morrison referred to (but did not cite) a *Jewish News* article that described Kadimah Progress's attitude to Sydney Hakoah in the 1950s as one of 'inexplicable antagonism'.<sup>77</sup> Keen maintained a continuing hostility to Hakoah. Years later, writing in the *Sydney Jewish News* in 1972, he still tried to elevate

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<sup>76</sup>*Kadimah Progress v Maccabi Interstate Soccer Match Programme*, Kadimah Progress Sports Club, Sydney, 1957.

<sup>77</sup>R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p.32.

his importance in Jewish sport and claimed that the JNF Cup teams were Kadimah Progress teams. He stated:

I took the Kadimah Progress team to Melbourne to play the local Maccabi side. The Sydney side in those years could have held its own with any of the present top second division sides ... since those years interest in Jewish soccer has gradually declined ... mainly due too lack of encouragement by officials.<sup>78</sup>

Apart from the JNF Cup fixtures Kadimah had no impact in Jewish soccer after 1955 and after the cup game of 1959 abandoned the sport forever. Kadimah also did not field a cricket team after 1957. After 1960, Kadimah focussed more on social events and fund-raising in support of Israel through groups such as the Jewish Welfare Society, Jewish National Fund, Israel Emergency Appeal, Maccabiah Games Fund and the United Israel Appeal. Its cabarets became famous in the Sydney Jewish community and Kadimah claimed in 1968 that it was 'responsible' for up to 'twenty marriages each year' — the couples having met at Kadimah functions. Kadimah became most prominent in sport in table tennis and produced several New South Wales representatives.<sup>79</sup> However, at the 1972 AGM, the now ex-president Keen castigated Kadimah for its neglect of sport and the low standard of its tennis and table tennis teams. He stated that 'the (president's) report shows a lack of knowledge of sport ... the sporting side of the club is at its lowest ebb for fourteen years ... the people who went up to collect trophies at the presentation dinner were dressed like hippies'.<sup>80</sup>

Keen's dream that Kadimah would become the leading Jewish sporting club failed, as had his attempt to control Jewish soccer in Sydney. This enabled Hakoah to become the soccer club to represent the community, even if it fielded fewer Jewish players as time passed. The battle for soccer between Hakoah and Kadimah may have been the result of personal rivalries, however, it is also likely that the battle reflected the changes taking place in the Sydney Jewish community. Kadimah Progress attempted to run a sports club based on the old model, of teams made exclusively of Jews. Hakoah officials took delight in publicising any infractions in the press. Keen reacted badly to this criticism.

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<sup>78</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 29 December 1972.

<sup>79</sup> *Sydney Jewish News*, 14 June 1968.

<sup>80</sup> Minutes of Meeting, Kadimah Progress Sports Club, AGM, 13 February 1972.

Hakoah focussed instead on building up an excellent soccer team that could play at the highest level and represent the community. Despite its public feud with Keen, Hakoah allowed its contracted players to represent Sydney in the JNF Cup matches. This was sensible politics on its part. A refusal to do so may have led to a public backlash.

Kadimah's aim of fielding an all-Jewish soccer team to play at a reasonable standard was unrealistic. The experience of Hakoah and other immigrant-based clubs such as Prague and Austral in this era, showed these teams could not compete at the highest level while relying only on players from their own communities. The talent pool was too small.

### **Hakoah and Jewish identity in the 1950s**

From 1948, Sydney Hakoah played in the Metropolitan League. It won the second grade competition in 1950 and first grade in 1951. Hakoah was admitted to the Southern League — the second highest level available — in 1954, and its success at this level brought praise from soccer authorities. Bill Orr, secretary of the New South Wales Soccer Association (NSWSA) stated that 'Hakoah have proved themselves as one of the greatest additions to Sydney soccer for many years. Their performance has been outstanding.'<sup>81</sup>

It was in the early 1950s that Hakoah began to firmly establish itself as the sporting representative of the Jewish people in Sydney. The club was led by a combination of pre-war refugees and post-war immigrants. Victory in the battle with Kadimah Progress cemented Hakoah's position in Jewish sport. Importantly, soccer became the sole sport of Hakoah at this time. While the club had initially adopted the Viennese model of the multi-sports club the various sections of Sydney Hakoah gradually broke away one by one in the early 1950s to form independent clubs. Sydney Hakoah officials concentrated on building the soccer club and were content for other sports to be independent. The table tennis club under the leadership of Dorly Shipp was re-organised but it folded after couple of years, as both Kadimah and JASA also offered the sport. Shipp played for JASA in 1957. Although the tennis club retained the title Hakoah for a time, it operated independently from the mid-1950s. By 1960 it 'was not fond

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<sup>81</sup>*Jewish Times*, 17 September 1954.

of the name Hakoah because it caused confusion with the soccer club'. By 1963, following an earlier amalgamation, it had become the Maccabean Tennis Club.<sup>82</sup>

As immigrant-based clubs began to gain a foothold in Australian soccer, Hakoah came to be recognised as the representative of a more multicultural Sydney Jewry. Cultural leadership was slipping from the grasp of the old established Anglo-Australian Jews. This occurred in the period 1945 to 1954, when the Jewish population of Australia increased by 17 600 to 48 436 in 1954.<sup>83</sup>

Publicly representing Sydney Jewry on the sporting field brought its problems. There was spectator violence at several matches involving both Kadimah Progress and Hakoah. While Hakoah was still playing in the Metropolitan League in 1950, there were problems between the emerging immigrant-based clubs and district clubs. Part of the problem was a clash of style. The Europeans preferred a short passing style with defensive 'niggling' to win back the ball while most of the district clubs preferred the 'kick and rush' style with robust tackling including vigorous shoulder charging. Both sets of players saw the other as playing the sport unfairly. In June 1950 the Metropolitan League warned Hakoah and four other immigrant clubs that 'un-sportsmanlike behaviour could lead to disqualification'.<sup>84</sup>

In June 1954 trouble erupted at the Hakoah versus Europa match at Blick Oval at Belmore. In a robust match Europa adopted roughhouse tactics in the second half that saw four players sent off. Eventually arguments began among spectators and police were summoned. The referee L McDonald stated after the game that 'Europa is the worst side I have ever refereed in ten years with the association'.<sup>85</sup> Two years later Europa had four players suspended who were each fined £30 by the Association. Many critics were calling for Europa's expulsion from the League.<sup>86</sup> There was almost a riot on 4 June 1955 at the match between the Yugoslav White Eagles Club (Serbian) and Kadimah. A White Eagles' player made anti-Semitic remarks about the Kadimah players in Serbian. He was understood by one of the Kadimah players who reported this to the referee, who declined to act. Tempers frayed soon thereafter. Towards the end of the game an all-in brawl was halted by officials. One Kadimah player

<sup>82</sup>R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 32.

<sup>83</sup>S Rutland, 'Are you Jewish? Postwar Jewish Immigration to Australia, 1945-1954, *The Australian Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. V, no. 2, 1991, p. 51.

<sup>84</sup>R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 32.

<sup>85</sup>*Jewish Times*, 1 June 1954.

<sup>86</sup>*Soccer Weekly News*, 23 June 1956.



reported that he had been threatened with a knife by a White Eagles' supporter.<sup>87</sup> White Eagles had been founded in 1953 by a young wartime Chetnik veteran but some pro-Yugoslav Serbs were also involved. White Eagles was expelled from the New South Wales Soccer Federation (NSWSF) in 1960.<sup>88</sup> A club using the same name, and based on the Serb community of Liverpool, re-emerged in the 1990s.<sup>89</sup>

The most infamous incident involving Hakoah in this period occurred on 11 July 1955 at Snape Park, Maroubra. The match was between Hakoah and Sydney Austral, another immigrant-based club with links to the Sydney Dutch community. It was an important match for Hakoah who needed to win to consolidate its hold on third position in the table. Late in the game Hakoah was awarded a penalty kick which was disputed. After the kick had been converted, the Austral goalkeeper G de Vries swore at the linesman and was sent off. He refused to leave but was escorted to the line by his team mates, where he accidentally knocked a young supporter to the ground. As another supporter moved to help the boy the Austral forward J De Pyper began fighting with a spectator and 'within seconds 900 spectators rushed around and several fights broke out' in what was described as 'the worst demonstration in the history of New South Wales soccer'.<sup>90</sup> The match was abandoned with Austral leading 5-1. There were accusations that Austral players had used anti-Semitic remarks. Not only did the incident create bad press for the sport and embarrassment for the Association, it caused a rift in the Jewish community. Austral had several Dutch Jews on its committee, some of whom had lived in concentration camps and knew 'what it was like to be called a Bastard Jew'. The *Jewish Times* accused these Jews of 'double loyalty' and challenged them: 'if the excitement of the sports field brings dormant prejudices into the open, a Jew from Holland must make the decision where he stands — outside or inside the Jewish community of Sydney'.<sup>91</sup> One week later a match between Kadimah and Liverpool at Liverpool was abandoned with 30 minutes remaining when Liverpool spectators began hurling violent abuse at the referee.<sup>92</sup>

This spate of violent incidents at matches involving Jewish teams was more than a 'clash of styles'. The incidents at the Hakoah/Austral and Kadimah/White

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<sup>87</sup> *Jewish Times*, 10 June 1955.

<sup>88</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer: A History 1959-1990*, p. 65.

<sup>89</sup> *NSFSF Annual Reports 1994*, (and continuing). See league tables.

<sup>90</sup> *Jewish Times*, 17 July 1955.

<sup>91</sup> 'Editorial', *Jewish Times*, 17 July 1955.

<sup>92</sup> *Jewish Times*, 22 July 1955.

Eagles matches demonstrated that anti-Semitism was probably a factor in soccer violence at this time. Hakoah and Kadimah were clearly identified with the Jewish community, they promoted this identification publicly through; the wearing of the blue and white colours, the names of their respective clubs and the wearing of the Star of David symbol. When Hakoah played against immigrant-based clubs it was inevitable that at least some of the opposition spectators articulated this difference. Anti-Semitism was too deeply ingrained in the European psyche for this not to occur. As Colin Tatz pointed out, for Europeans anti-Semitism 'is a normal state of mind'.<sup>93</sup> It only took a trigger, an on-field incident, to spark a violent confrontation. Other factors in the violence could have been cultural or ethnic and related to hatreds left over from the recently ended war in Europe. There were many German speakers involved with Hakoah and the use of this language could anger many groups at this time.

### Support for Sydney Hakoah

It is difficult to establish the levels of public support for Hakoah in this era because the club did not maintain attendance records and crowds in the NSWSA second division were rarely published in the newspapers. The crowd at the match between Hakoah and Austral that ended in riot in 1955 was reported as 900 (Snape Park is an open ground so this was a rough estimate). Hakoah's first match at Erskineville Oval against Concord on 7 April 1956 drew 1 200 spectators, a healthy crowd for a second division game.<sup>94</sup> *Soccer Weekly News* stated in April 1956 that 'Hakoah has one of the strongest supporter followings in the state'.<sup>95</sup> By 1960 Hakoah was able to draw 4 500 spectators to a match against Polonia Victoria. Again, it is difficult to draw too many conclusions from this. While it is a significant number because Polonia was a Melbourne team, there is no way of knowing whether there was local support for Polonia from Poles residing in Sydney. Crowds for the Kennard Cup (see Chapter Six) are also not a good yardstick as most games were double headers. Despite a lack of hard data there is no doubt that by the mid-1950s Sydney Hakoah was the dominant Jewish soccer club with a solid core of supporters attending premiership matches. The club may have alienated some Jewish leaders and official bodies, but it could not fail to be noticed. During its disputes with the MSU and JASA, Kadimah and the Jewish Board of Deputies Hakoah's exploits

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<sup>93</sup>C Tatz, 'Jews, Golf and History', unpub. paper presented at *Sporting Traditions XIII*, Adelaide, July 2001.

<sup>94</sup>*Sun Herald*, 18 April 1956.

<sup>95</sup>*Soccer Weekly News*, 7 April 1956.

continued to be reported in the press and its core support seems to have hovered between 1 000 and 2 000. While these numbers may be small compared to other clubs, they are significant given the Jewish population of Sydney. At the 1954 census it was only 18 605. Most of this population, 12 604, resided the city and eastern suburbs— Hakoah's heartland.<sup>96</sup>

The influx of Hungarian Jews after the 1956 Hungarian rising may have boosted Hakoah's level of support at a crucial time and helped it consolidate its position in the community. By the end of 1956, 750 Hungarian Jews had arrived in Sydney and a further 1 619 arrived in 1957.<sup>97</sup> This group was notable because it contained a high proportion of young people, mainly men, many of whom were factory workers and labourers. As 'soccer was the sport closest to the hearts of Hungarians'<sup>98</sup> many began supporting Hakoah. Sydney Hakoah provided a valuable integrative service to new arrivals, enhancing its position as a flagship of the community. Frank Lowy was one such young immigrant from Czechoslovakia who supported Hakoah. He 'simply *had* [sic] to get to Hakoah's home ground at Maroubra for kick-off. Nothing would stop him'.<sup>99</sup>

The main factors that saw Hakoah rise to a position of prominence was the ambition and drive of its officials. They were in no doubt that they wanted Hakoah to be a leading football club. The teams they produced 'played with great panache'.<sup>100</sup> Hakoah was also a physical representation of Jewishness, a public face of the community. While some traditional elements in the community may have been displeased about this (as evidenced by Hakoah's disputes with religious and secular leaders), for European Jews the club represented an important public statement of their existence beyond the holocaust. On a much more simple level, supporting a soccer club was a typical activity for European young men. Sydney Hakoah presented a well-run and successful team that played with style. The club was also symbolic of the politics of the community. Hakoah challenged the existing Anglo-Australian orthodoxy in public and won. If the club needed to employ non-Jewish players to ensure the success of Hakoah so be it. The common theme in Hakoah's history from the mid-1950s was the struggle to fund a competitive professional team at the highest available level of soccer. However, it was never able to build a consistently large support base in aid of this objective.

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<sup>96</sup> *Australian Census 1954*, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

<sup>97</sup> W D Rubenstein, *The Jews in Australia 1945 to the Present*, p. 80.

<sup>98</sup> E Kunz, *The Hungarians in Australia*, p. 127.

<sup>99</sup> J Margo, *Frank Lowy: Pushing the Limits*, Harper Collins, Sydney 2000, p. 74.

## Conclusions

Hakoah's promotion to the Southern League in 1954 marked the beginning of the club's rise to the top in Australian soccer. From this time the club concentrated exclusively on soccer, and the revenue from fund-raising schemes and social functions was directed towards supporting the team and ensuring its success.

The elevation of Hakoah was a triumph for those who had advocated muscular Judaism as the basis of the club in the 1940s. Klimt, Weiss, Raymond, Dukes and others adapted the principals of Hakoah Vienna to the Sydney environment and created a proud tradition for many in the Jewish community. The club had been re-formed mainly due to the efforts of Hans Klimt and other former members of Hakoah Vienna in 1944, at the instigation of the former president of Hakoah Vienna, I H Körner. Körner's correspondence with his Australian contacts, speeches made by Klimt and Gustav Bock and club announcements in the press establish that the notion of muscular Judaism formed the basis for the push to reform the club. Once re-organised, Sydney Hakoah openly identified itself with Zionism and reinforced this allegiance by holding public lectures and discussion on Zionism at the Tarbut Club, Sydney's principal meeting place for émigré Zionists.

An aggressive and professional approach on the sporting field echoed that of its Viennese parent club. It was something new in the Sydney Jewish sporting community. Hakoah challenged the authority of the Jewish War Memorial over sport and was soon running its own multi-sports club. Its significant involvement in the selection process for the New South Wales team to compete at the aborted 1945 Melbourne sporting Carnival demonstrates how much influence Sydney Hakoah had gained in a short time. However, from 1946 it began to focus more on soccer and it was in this sport that Hakoah became known as representative of Sydney Jewry.

Hakoah was challenged for a time by the Kadimah Progress Sports Club, which was largely the fiefdom of one man, George Keen. Progress was also a multi-sport club but it was at soccer that Keen most desired to usurp Hakoah's

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<sup>100</sup> J Margo, *Frank Lowy: Pushing the Limits*, p. 107.

prominent position in the Jewish and the soccer communities. This was a battle Hakoah won. Klimt hinted that the wealth of Hungarian immigrants may have been a factor in this. However, there is no doubt that Hakoah's pragmatism was a key to its success. It realised that to succeed in soccer the club would need to employ non-Jewish players. When the Jewish Board of Deputies objected to this, Hakoah simply withdrew and took no notice. Hakoah pursued a pragmatic approach that included playing on the Sabbath if necessary. By the mid-1950s Hakoah was widely recognised as 'the' Jewish club with increasing attendances and wide coverage in the Jewish and mainstream press. The club's success at becoming a Jewish flagship may have contributed to violence at some of its matches.

Non-Jewish players appeared for Hakoah by 1954 because it became increasingly difficult to find Jewish players of the calibre required by the competition. So while Sydney Hakoah brought the Sydney Jewish community more into the public eye, it included non-Jewish professionals bought from the soccer market place. The club had Jewish management, raised funds in the Jewish community, relied on the Jewish community for spectator support, was widely publicised in the Jewish and daily press as the Jewish team and wore Jewish colours adorned with Jewish symbols. There was a sense of pride in the community at the club's achievements. Success in the Southern league in 1954 and the New South Wales Second Division, as it was renamed in 1955, placed Hakoah in a position where it directly challenged the authority of the NSWSA leading to the soccer split of 1957 and the formation of the NSWSF (see Chapter Six).

At the 1954 Hakoah AGM it was proposed that Kadimah and Hakoah should merge so that at least the best Jewish players would be available to one club playing at a high level. This decision was deferred and the proposal lapsed. At this meeting Fritz Weiss was elected president and the club appointed its first patron, Abraham Landa, the State Minister for Housing.<sup>101</sup> Weiss's election provided a direct link to the Sydney Hakoah of 1939 showing that the old Viennese Hakoahs still had some influence. Some of the immediate post-World War II players such as George Shipp were also still playing for the club. However, most of the players were newcomers. Hakoah's first club rooms at 39 Penkivil Street Bondi were opened in May 1954, providing a focal point for club

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<sup>101</sup>R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 36.

activities and for fund raising. Hakoah also moved to a new home ground at Kensington Oval.

Hakoah's first season in the higher grade was successful when the club finished second on the premiership table, but was defeated by St George in the semi-final.<sup>102</sup> This Hakoah squad boasted Jewish players including Bernie Jacoby, Peter Nash and Allan Levinson. Hakoah were placed last on the table at the half way mark of the 1955 competition but managed to qualify for the semi-finals. Although the control of the club changed to a newer generation in the mid-1950s, the election of 1939 team member Ady Ert as president in 1955 maintained the link with the original 1939 team. Ert appeared in the earliest known picture of Sydney Hakoah taken at Rushcutters Bay Park in 1939.<sup>103</sup>

In 1956 Hakoah signed a lease for Erskineville Oval and for the first time, the club had an enclosed ground with a capacity of 16 000 including a grandstand that could seat 2 500 people and a pitch of international standard.<sup>104</sup> Gate revenue could now be collected in a controlled way using turnstiles. However, many spectators observed from outside the ground as it was surrounded by a wire fence rather than a high wall. The team was treated to above average facilities and a better surface to play on than their rivals. As early as 1954 the secretary of the NSWSA Bill Orr had indicated that 'Hakoah had done remarkably well for a team from junior football ... large crowds attending their fixtures'.<sup>105</sup> Former Sunderland player Billy Walsh was coach and the club proposed a nursery for junior players from the ages of 10 to 18.<sup>106</sup> Hakoah had become one of the best organised and professionally run soccer clubs in the state. Walsh led Hakoah to the 1956 Southern League premiership and to victory in the knock-out challenge cup where the team defeated Manly 5-0 in the final.<sup>107</sup>

Hakoah's success in the second division premiership triggered demands that the club should be promoted to the State League First Division. An automatic relegation and promotion system was supported strongly by immigrant-based

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<sup>102</sup> *Jewish Times*, 3 September 1954.

<sup>103</sup> 'Hakoah Supplement', *Australian Jewish Times*, 23 October 1976.

<sup>104</sup> *Soccer Weekly News*, 14 April 1956, p. 16.

<sup>105</sup> *The Jewish News*, 11 June 1954.

<sup>106</sup> *Jewish Times*, 3 February 1956.

<sup>107</sup> The final team — Schwartz, Nash, Costa, Jacoby, Walsh, McAleese, Alexander, Levinson, Vidas, Murphy and Higgins consisted of only four Jews.

clubs, which were accustomed to this practice in Europe. With Walter Sternberg as president, Hakoah was at the forefront of this argument, which became the catalyst for the celebrated split in New South Wales soccer in 1957. Hakoah's success cemented its place as the pre-eminent Jewish sporting club and wrought changes that deeply affected the nature and structure of Australian soccer and its place in Australian sporting culture.

Figure 5.1 Sydney Hakoah team photograph, 1951.

## Chapter Six

### Hakoah and the 1957 New South Wales soccer split

‘In Israel there are plenty of Jewish players, not in Australia and one of the reasons is there are too many things to do.’<sup>1</sup>

This chapter will examine the development of Sydney Hakoah from the mid-1950s to 1961 when the club won its first major championship. The chapter begins by examining the condition of soccer in New South Wales in the mid-1950s, taking into account changes that had taken place since the late 1930s. Attention is focused on the immediate post-World War II period, when some migrant-based clubs worked their way up through the ranks of New South Wales soccer, and challenged the hegemony of the established district-based clubs and the authority of the NSWSA. The chapter will analyse the role of Sydney Hakoah in the conflict between the NSWSA and many of its constituent clubs that led to the formation of the breakaway NSWSF in 1957, and the eventual demise of the NSWSA. Lastly the chapter will discuss the success of the NSWSF and Hakoah’s leadership role as it laid the foundations for the domination of soccer by migrant and later ethnically-based clubs in the 1960s.

The following questions arise. How was Hakoah’s success and leading role in a high profile sport greeted in the Jewish community? How did the community react to Hakoah’s growing professionalism? What role did Hakoah play in Jewish community sport?

#### New South Wales soccer in the mid-1950s

It is clear that the post-World War II immigrants made a substantial impact on soccer in New South Wales. For a variety of reasons soccer has largely been a hidden constituency in Australian sport: It was the province of wharf labourers around Sydney’s docklands, factory workers in the inner west and heavy engineering workers in the Granville Parramatta area. It also had a substantial

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Lederer, Interview, 1994.



following in the coalfields of New South Wales, both north and south of Sydney where it was the most popular game in many mining communities. Philip Mosely has noted that 'soccer has traditionally been a working class recreation with little bourgeois involvement to speak of'.<sup>2</sup> Soccer had been played in New South Wales since 1880 but by the 1950s it ran second to rugby league as the most important winter sport, with rugby union the sport of the middle class. New South Wales soccer had many problems in the first half of the twentieth century, exacerbated by periods of intense infighting and poor management. There were major rebellions against the controlling body in New South Wales in 1914 and again in 1928. Soccer also 'lost the battle for Catholic schools to the New South Wales Rugby League (NSWRL) in 1913, and the election of a State labour government in 1920 facilitated the spread of the rugby league code into the public high schools system. By 1921, 102 public schools competed in rugby league competitions'.<sup>3</sup> The private schools were the domain of rugby union as was the University of Sydney. Soccer also lacked an 'Ashes' tradition whereas cricket and the two rugby codes had high profile tours to and from England. When international soccer teams did tour to Australia they drew large crowds proving that soccer had market potential, largely untapped. Importantly, rugby league controlled most of the major enclosed grounds in Sydney since the 1910s.

In the decade before World War II State League soccer in New South Wales was dominated by factory teams. Many works or factory teams pre-dated the 1930s but in that decade many large companies introduced sporting and welfare associations in the belief that they would contribute towards a more contented and therefore more productive workforce.<sup>4</sup> This led to the establishment of many works sporting teams and leagues in Sydney. Metters (stove manufacturers) and Goodyear (tyre manufactures) took this a step further and established semi-professional soccer teams, attracting many of the state's best players who were offered jobs as well as pay for play. Other senior clubs such as Granville (Clyde Engineering) also had links to factories. From 1934 to 1941 Metters and Goodyear between them won

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<sup>2</sup> P Mosely, 'Factory Football' *Sporting Traditions*, vol. 2 no. 1, November 1985, p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> K Corcoran, 'The Business of Rugby League: Some Social and Economic Aspects in the Sydney Metropolitan Area 1908-1952', unpub. MA Hon. thesis, UNSW, 1997, p. 41. See also P Mosely, *A Social History of Soccer in New South Wales 1880-1957*, pp. 157-160.

<sup>4</sup> P Mosely, *A Social History of Soccer in New South Wales 1880-1957*, pp. 166-201. Mosely concentrates an entire chapter to the topic of factory-based football and its importance to the elite level of the game in New South Wales from the 1930s to the 1950s.

four State League premierships, were runners up on four occasions and won the state cup three times. These teams attracted crowds of up to 10 000 spectators. With the resources of the company behind them, such clubs brought professional organisation to the game on and off the field.<sup>5</sup>

In 1943 Metters, Wallsend, Adamstown and Leichhardt-Annandale walked out of an Association meeting because they were denied the right to stage fund-raising games. The four clubs then set up a breakaway league, the New South Wales State Soccer League (NSWSSL).<sup>6</sup> Eventually the breakaway league gained the approval and recognition of the ASFA, and by 1944 had taken over the administration of the game becoming the New South Wales Soccer Football Association Limited (NSWSA).<sup>7</sup> It was this body that guided soccer in the State in the immediate post-World War II period and had to deal with the impact of mass immigration on the game.

Many of the European immigrants, who began arriving in large numbers in 1948, brought with them a love of soccer as part of their cultural baggage. Soon clubs based around groups of migrants, certain nationalities (such as Dutch or Italian), or ethnic groups (such as Croatian or Serbian) began to emerge. Migrant-based soccer clubs were not a new phenomenon in Australia and existed at the local level in the 1930s. Greek soccer clubs existed in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide in the mid-1930s 'as a means of socialising the Greek youth into their ethnic group'. The Atlas Soccer Club was established in Sydney in 1939 and played against Hakoah in the Eastern Suburbs League. An Italian club named Savoia existed in Melbourne. Steve Georgakis stated that a match between the Melbourne Greek team Apollon and Savoia, played at Middle Park on 22 July 1934, may have been the first inter-ethnic soccer match in Australia.<sup>8</sup> There was also an Italian club named Club Italia playing amateur soccer in Sydney in the late 1930s.<sup>9</sup> In 1949 a Maltese Settlers soccer club played in a curtain-raiser to an Australian national team game. By the mid-1950s there were a profusion of migrant-based clubs in Sydney drawing on the Italian,

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<sup>5</sup> P Mosely, *A Social History of Soccer in New South Wales 1880-1957*, p. 187.

<sup>6</sup> P Mosely, *A Social History of Soccer in New South Wales 1880-1957*, pp. 273-274.

<sup>7</sup> P Mosely, *A Social History of Soccer in New South Wales 1880-1957*, p. 275.

<sup>8</sup> S Georgakis, *Sport and the Australian Greek*, pp. 122-123.

<sup>9</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer: A History 1950 to 1990*, Australian Sports Commission, Canberra, 1995, p. 25.

Maltese, Dutch, Yugoslav, Greek, Macedonian, Polish, Serbian, Croatian, Ukrainian and Hungarian communities.<sup>10</sup> In 1950 the NSWSA was already working with the Federal Government to use soccer to help integrate immigrants into the community:

The NSWSA junior association is endeavouring in every way possible to make the new arrivals at home. The secretary Mr. L Wilson, maintains contact with Federal immigration authorities and with migrant camps through junior association officials in each area and officials then arrange for their team to enter a suitable competition.<sup>11</sup>

The first migrant-based club to have a significant impact on senior soccer was formed at the Greta migrant camp and won the Northern Cup (Newcastle) in 1951. The club formally became Greta Australs in 1952 with its home ground at the camp and 'it was an important diversion for camp residents, for whom life was often dull'.<sup>12</sup> Greta became a powerful club in northern New South Wales and in later years constructed its own ground with licensed premises at Birmingham Gardens in the suburb of Wallsend.<sup>13</sup> In 1952 the migrant-based Prague Soccer Club and Sydney Austral played in the Sydney first division while Hakoah was in the second division.

Prague provides an interesting case study of a migrant-based club of the post-World War II era. After its formation in 1950, it was one of the first migrant-based teams to make an impression on senior soccer in the Sydney metropolitan area and its success paved the way for other clubs such as Hakoah. Just as newly arrived Jewish youths had played soccer at Rushcutters Bay Park in the late 1930s, so did Czechs who arrived as displaced persons in the late 1940s. Beginning with a casual kick-about, they later formed a team and entered the Metropolitan League in 1950. Prague was formed and guided by three ambitious men, all with a background in senior soccer. Stan Slavik, the chief instigator of the club, had played soccer in Czechoslovakia and a number of European countries. He arrived in Australia in the mid-1930s and played for Goodyear and Metters. A surveyor who spoke eight languages, he joined the intelligence department when World War II broke out.

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<sup>10</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer: A History 1950 to 1990*, p. 27.

<sup>11</sup> *Soccer Weekly News*, 8 April 1950.

<sup>12</sup> C Keating, *Greta: A History of the Army and Migrant Camp at Greta, New South Wales 1939-1960*, Uri Windt, Sydney, 1997, p. 69.

After the bombing of Darwin in 1942 he was transferred to the navy and served in New Guinea, Borneo and Java. After the war he became a successful businessman involved in farming, restaurants, and delicatessens dealing in Slavonic foods.<sup>14</sup> Slavik's ally was Englishman Viv Chalwin, who arrived in Sydney in 1951, and was an accredited English Football Association coach, who had been an English schoolboy representative. He was a university educated engineer who came to Sydney to take up directorships in several companies. Chalwin became deeply involved in Sydney's cultural scene especially the Musica Viva Society. He soon linked with Slavik in financing and organising the Prague team.<sup>15</sup> Chalwin also became involved in university soccer. He played for and served on the committees of Sydney University Soccer Club in the 1950s and University of New South Wales Soccer Club in the 1960s.<sup>16</sup> The third principal of the club was Karl Rodney, a Czech who arrived in Sydney in 1949, who entered the fur trade and became president of Prague from 1950 to 1959. He later joined Sydney Hakoah and was twice elected president in 1963 and 1967.<sup>17</sup> Due to their personal wealth and knowledge of soccer, this trio transformed Prague so that it became one of the leading clubs in New South Wales soccer within a decade. Between 1959 and 1964 Prague won several premierships and cup competitions.

With Prague's outstanding success in the late 1950s and 1960s, the team drew large crowds. There is no doubt the club drew substantial numbers of spectators from outside the Sydney Czech community. As late as 1981 the Czech population of Australia numbered only 16 152 with only 36 per cent of these living in Sydney.<sup>18</sup> Czechs quickly assimilated and had a high rate of intermarriage, finding partners from nearly 70 different countries between 1948 and 1980.<sup>19</sup> The vast majority of Czechs who arrived after 1945 were young males between the ages of 20 and 30. Initially they formed an ideal market for a soccer club, but most quickly found jobs and integrated into the general community. By the mid-1960s:

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<sup>13</sup> S Grant, *Jack Pollard's Soccer Records*, Jack Pollard, Sydney, 1974, p. 187.

<sup>14</sup> *Soccer Year Book*, NSW SF, Sydney, 1958.

<sup>15</sup> P Mosely, *A Social History of Soccer in New South Wales 1880-1957*, p. 305.

<sup>16</sup> A Hughes, *C'mon you Wales; A History of the University of New South Wales Soccer Club*, unpub. manuscript, forthcoming, 2004.

<sup>17</sup> R Fisher & P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney, 1938-1994*, pp. 20, 52, 60.

<sup>18</sup> M Cigler, *The Czechs in Australia*, A E Press, Melbourne, 1983, p. 141.

<sup>19</sup> M Cigler, *The Czechs in Australia*, p. 127.

the attendance at Czech national functions, club participation and general meetings of Czech activities had begun to shrink all over Australia. From over 100 Czech organisations in the early 1950s, there were only fifteen left by the middle of the 1960s. Supporters of assimilation were overjoyed by such a development.<sup>20</sup>

Prague ceased to be an important focal point for Sydney-based Czechs. Non-committed soccer supporters found other clubs to support. Clubs such as APIA, Hakoah and St George Budapest became more successful and gradually Prague's gates declined. By 1971 its support had dwindled and the club could no longer afford to field an expensive professional team. By 1971, Prague had declined to the point that it was taken over by the Yugoslav community-based club Yugal.

The rapid development of Prague in the 1950s, which was replicated by Sydney Austral and Sydney Hakoah, gave immigrants the incentive to watch soccer. The majority of the first wave of immigrants were men and it was the normal thing for young men in Europe to play or watch soccer. The aggregate attendance in the Sydney premiership was 132 000 in 1953. With Prague and Austral drawing large crowds, attendance almost trebled to 346 000 in 1956, the last season before the split in New South Wales soccer.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, the old district clubs (including the coalfield's clubs) still dominated the competition. While the migrant-based clubs began to draw large crowds they did not win a senior competition before the split. The tables below show the major competition winners in New South Wales soccer between 1947 — when post-War European immigrants began to arrive — and 1956, the last year the NSWSA controlled soccer.

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<sup>20</sup> M Cigler, *The Czechs in Australia*, p. 73.

<sup>21</sup> P Mosely, 'Soccer', in P Mosely et al (eds.), *Sporting Immigrants*, p. 157.

Table 6.1 New South Wales State League Premiership 1947-1956

Year	Winner	Runner Up
1947	Lake Macquarie	Leichhardt-Annandale
1948	Adamstown	Leichhardt Annandale
1949	Leichhardt Annandale	Wallsend
1950	Leichhardt Annandale	Granville
1951	Wallsend	Granville
1952	Granville	Wallsend
1953	Wallsend	Auburn
1954	Cessnock	Auburn
1955	Corrimal	Cessnock
1956	Leichhardt Annandale	Corrimal

Table 6.2 New South Wales State League Cup Winners 1947-1956

Year	Winner	Runner Up
1947	Corrimal	Canterbury Bankstown
1948	Leichhardt Annandale	Wallsend
1949	Leichhardt Annandale	Granville
1950	Wallsend	Granville
1951	Granville	Mayfield United
1952	Wallsend	West Wallsend
1953	Auburn	Corrimal
1954	Corrimal	Leichhardt Annandale
1955	Leichhardt Annandale	Granville
1956	Leichhardt Annandale	Corrimal

The tables show that the dominant clubs of this era came from the traditional working class heartlands of soccer, including the northern and southern coalfields. Five of the clubs had been founded in the nineteenth century. The most recent club was Mayfield United, which was founded in 1931. Such clubs had survived the brief hegemony of the factory-based professional clubs Goodyear and Metters in the 1930s and early 1940s.

Table 6.3 Founding year of district clubs in the  
New South Wales first division 1947-1956

Club	Founded
Adamstown	1889
Auburn	1897
Canterbury	1886
Cessnock	1906
Corrimal Rangers	1893
Granville	1882
Lake Macquarie	1912
Leichhardt Annandale	1910
Mayfield United	1931
Wallsend	1887
West Wallsend	1892

Senior soccer clubs in New South Wales played for the state league championship in 1956 but were divided into two leagues, the Southern Division and Northern Division. The teams played each other twice in each divisional league, and the first placed team at the end of the series was declared division champion. There was then a top four playoff series before a grand final to decide each divisional premier. The two grand finalists from each division then participated in a playoff series to determine the state league champion. The Northern Division consisted of clubs from Newcastle and the northern coalfields, while the Southern Division consisted of Sydney metropolitan clubs and three from the Illawarra. Prague and Austral, which played in the Southern League first division, did not threaten the dominance of the district clubs, as the final league table for the season shows.

Table 6.4 NSWSA, State Premiership Southern Division Final table 1956.

	Pld	W	L	D	F	A	Pts.
Leichhardt Annandale	22	14	3	5	54	32	33
Corrimal	22	15	5	2	61	36	32
Bankstown	22	15	6	1	49	35	31
Canterbury	22	10	6	6	64	41	26
Granville	22	10	8	4	50	34	24
Auburn	22	9	8	5	39	31	23
Gladesville	22	9	9	4	38	32	22
Balgownie	22	7	9	6	34	43	20
Sydney Austral	22	7	9	6	36	50	20
Woonona	22	7	14	1	40	62	15
Prague	22	5	14	3	37	55	13
North Shore	22	1	18	3	18	69	5

Many writers on Australian sport have stated that Australian soccer in the post-World War II years was 'taken over' by ethnically-based clubs.<sup>22</sup> It has also become part of the popular imagination that 'soccer was brought to Australia by post-War European immigrants'.<sup>23</sup> This was clearly not the case. Almost a decade after the first post-War immigrants had entered the game soccer in Sydney was still very much an 'Aussie' game. In particular the coalfields soccer clubs were immensely important to their local communities. Mosely has described how in the 1930s these close knit working class communities used their support of the soccer team as a form of social cement:

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<sup>22</sup> Apart from P Mosely's 'Factory Football', academic writing on Australian soccer focuses almost exclusively on the issues of ethnicity and violence. Papers on soccer at *Sporting Traditions* conferences, the biennial conferences of the Australian Society for Sports History, are invariably placed in the category 'Ethnicity and Sport'. A typical interpretation of the history of soccer in Australia is that of W Murray who stated that 'despite the pioneering efforts of the inevitable Scots and Brits in the early days, and the comparative success in the 1974 World Cup and the publicity that followed it, soccer has still to overcome the prejudice of being either a "pommie" game or a "wog" game'. *Football: A History of the World Game*, p. 77.

<sup>23</sup> SBS TV, 'Soccer Bloody Soccer' *Insight*, 1996.



Wallsend was a club that catered for the people ... the crucial factor in the club was the amount of grass roots support. It was the town's club. Its red shirted teams were known as the Bolshies and its fans the Red Terror ... the atmosphere when teams ran out at the Crystal Palace was intimidatory. The visitors knew they were playing in an aggrieved community. For Wallsend residents their club was the focal point for local expression.<sup>24</sup>

Granville, Australia's oldest soccer club, was also firmly working class and Australian. Although founded by Scotsmen in the 1880s, generations of working class Australians played for and supported the club. Families such as the Garsides and the Barkers were the lifeblood of the club. Frank Garside was president for eighteen years and his son Alan was a star player for the club from 1943 to 1958. Younger brother Frank also played at Granville until 1961. In 1951 and 1952 Granville won the State League Cup and the premiership respectively with a team that was mostly born and raised in the district.<sup>25</sup> The club had a working class democratic ethos. Alan Garside stated that:

You got your jumper and socks supplied and you bought your boots and shorts. What Granville did was, whatever money was left over at the end of the season you got so much on how many games [based on] you played. Everyone was even, so if you played the most games in a season you got the most money and if you played one you got the same ratio. The most I ever got was £100.<sup>26</sup>

The emergence and eventual dominance of migrant-based clubs was a slow and complex process. Even after the split in 1957 some of the district clubs remained powerful in the 1960s. It is also important to note that the power base of the migrant-based clubs was firmly located in the city. In the 1960s as the migrant-based and ethnically based-clubs became more dominant, elite soccer was restructured so that the competition became based in the Sydney metropolitan area, along similar lines to the NSWRL premiership in its profile and the running of its business. Meanwhile the northern coalfield clubs retreated and continued to run

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<sup>24</sup> P A Mosely, 'A Social History of Soccer in New South Wales', pp. 213-214.

<sup>25</sup> <sup>25</sup> G Stock, Interview with Alan Garside, *Studs Up*, November 1997. See also Granville Parramatta SFC Yearbook 1977.

<sup>26</sup> G Stock, Interview with Alan Garside, *Studs Up*, November 1997.

their clubs and competitions on the margins of soccer, continuing a century old community tradition.

### **Seeds of the 1957 soccer split**

Soccer under the NSWSA did not have a system of automatic promotion and relegation. The Association believed that promotion and relegation should be selective and take into account the dangers of whole districts losing first grade representation.<sup>27</sup> The executive of the Association decided the makeup of its competition. In the eyes of the Europeans who became involved in the sport in the early 1950s, success in a lower league should result in promotion to a higher league. The on-field success of Prague and Austral in the second division, as well as their economic power due to large gates, forced the Association to promote the two clubs in 1956. However, no club was relegated, rather the size of the league was increased to accommodate them.

Table 6.4 below shows that Prague performed poorly in its first season in the first division, and shows that in a 'two up—two down' automatic promotion and relegation system that these clubs favoured, Prague would have been relegated. Austral fared a little better and finished ninth. Prague and Austral won only twelve out of 44 games between them and both conceded over 50 goals, many more than they scored.

Rather than being an migrant-dominated sport at this time, the traditional working class nature of the majority of the clubs was notable when match reports are consulted. In September 1956 Corrimal complained to the Association that it was forced to play its semi-final against Leichhardt Annandale at the Sydney Sports Ground under lights on a Friday night. It was unfair because 'several of the Corrimal players are miners and do not finish work until late in the afternoon'.<sup>28</sup> The *Sydney Morning Herald* when discussing the forthcoming Southern Division grand final between Corrimal and Cessnock in October 1956 referred to the previous season's grand final between the same two club's as 'the battle of the miners'. The same article referred to 'inside left Jack Lennard, son of former

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<sup>27</sup> P Mosely, 'A Social History of Soccer in New South Wales', pp; 213-214; p. 331

international Percy Lennard who became the first coalfield's player to represent Australia in 1922'.<sup>29</sup> A survey of match reports also indicates that apart from Austral and Prague, the players names are almost 100 per cent Anglo-Australian or Irish-Australian, demonstrating that it is a misconception that European immigrants seized the game at senior level in a dramatic coup. The stars of the sport in 1956 were Australian born and bred players such as Leichhardt Annandale captain Joe Marston, who had recently returned from England after five years with Preston North End in England. Marston appeared on the losing side in the 1954 FA Cup Final against West Bromwich Albion. Others were Ron Lord (Australian goalkeeper who played at the 1956 Olympic Games), Bob Bignall, Corrimal centre half and Australian Olympic soccer team captain; Keith Learmouth of Corrimal; Bruce Morrow of Wallsend; Alan Garside and Ray Marshall of Granville; Kevin O'Neill and Alec Heaney of Cessnock to name a few.

The level of penetration of senior soccer by immigrants by the mid-1950s can be gauged from a promotional match staged by the association in September 1956. Billed 'Continental XI' versus 'New South Wales', it was an effort by the Association to include the immigrants but also to exploit their interest in the game for financial gain by attracting a large mixed local and immigrant crowd as an Association fund raising venture. A second string New South Wales team won the match 4-3. Playing for New South Wales was 'the only importation, dark-haired forward Simic Marko from the Mayfield Club in Newcastle'.<sup>30</sup> Marko was the first of the post-War immigrants to gain a representative jersey. The continental team was a combined Austral/Prague team and was coached by Joe Vlasits who went on to play a leading role in soccer coaching in Australia. Almost a decade after immigrants began to play soccer in New South Wales a second string local team could defeat a select team of Europeans playing in the league while immigrants could not gain significant representation in the state second XI.

The NSWSA, that managed soccer after the split of 1943, hoped to promote soccer through representative matches. South Africa toured in 1948 and while Australia lost the series (three losses, one win, one drawn) the games attracted sizeable crowds including 40 000 to the first match at the Sydney Cricket Ground. Australia toured

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<sup>28</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 September 1956.

<sup>29</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 October 1956.

<sup>30</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 September 1956.

South Africa in 1950 and shared the four match series. Australia played a three match home series against New Zealand in 1954, winning the series two matches to one including 4-1 wins in the second and third matches. By the time South Africa returned in 1955 Australian soccer and its management had failed to progress unlike South Africa. Australia were trounced in all internationals including 6-0 in Sydney and 8-0 in Adelaide (Australia's biggest defeat in a full international). The Australian system of selecting local players in each host city so as to save money and appease local officials, rather than the best available team was badly exposed. Another problem was that the Australian team assembled for the first time only hours before each game. Leo Baumgartner recalled touring Australia with F K Austria in 1956. After the visitors had defeated Australia 8-3 at the Sydney Cricket Ground, the Austrian players were amazed to find the Australians had been brought together just three hours before the game:

We were told by the Australians that they had been brought together just two or three hours before the game. To play in a representative side? Some players did not even know each other! We thought we were not hearing very well or that somebody was trying to make a joke of it, but we were assured this was the way the team was selected.<sup>31</sup>

Club tours staged by the NSWSA, by teams such as F K Austria, proved popular fund-raising activities. Austria Rapids played South China at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) in 1955 attracting 33 000 people, earning £10 000 profit for the Association.<sup>32</sup> There is some evidence to suggest that the profile of soccer crowds was changing with the migrant clubs out-drawing many of the district teams in Sydney. On the club scene the migrant-based clubs began to outdraw the district teams, particularly in Sydney. With their increased contribution to revenue, there were calls by the migrant-based clubs for a greater voice in the way the sport's administration, and such clubs also wanted to make the game more professional. The poor performance and loose organisation of the Australian national team, which was dominated by Australian-born players confirmed the immigrants' view that the game needed to be transformed.

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<sup>31</sup> L Baumgartner, *The Little Professor of Soccer*, Marketing Productions, Sydney 1968, p. 45.

<sup>32</sup> *Soccer Yearbook*, NSWSA, Sydney, 1956.

## Hakoah and the 1957 New South Wales soccer split

When Corrimal defeated Cessnock 2-0 at Lambert Park on 14 October 1955 to win their second successive state league premiership, nobody among the teams, the spectators, the press or sporting community, could have guessed that it was the last act of soccer as it was traditionally known in New South Wales. Ironically, that match was marred by a rare example of crowd violence, when a spectator jumped the fence towards the end of the game, and struck Corrimal player Phil Peters a blow on the back of the head. This almost led to an all-in-brawl. However, order was soon restored.<sup>33</sup> Such accounts of spectator violence soon became commonplace in press coverage of soccer.

Earlier, on 22 September 1956, a soccer event occurred which was to have a major impact on the future of soccer. Hakoah defeated Manly Warringah 5-0 in the Southern Division, division two grand final, after easily winning the minor premiership. With the promotion of Prague and Austral in the previous season clearly in mind, Hakoah president Walter Sternberg stated after the game that he now considered 'his club's admission into the first division to be nothing more than a formality'. George Smith, chairman of the NSWSA, did not concur with this assessment. He declared that 'Hakoah's promotion will be considered by the board before the end of November'.<sup>34</sup>

Sternberg was a key figure in the history of Hakoah Soccer Club. He was a jeweller by profession and the man most responsible for transforming Hakoah from being a multi-sports club to a soccer club. Sternberg was also the first president of the club who did not have a direct link with the old guard of pre-World War II Hakoah. He had joined the club executive in 1955 as vice president to Ady Ert, and took over as president in 1956. It was under Sternberg's leadership, supported by Ert and Bill Kadison, that Hakoah began to look seriously at a place in the State League. Sternberg was a master publicist and maintained a steady flow of information on the club to both the Jewish and mainstream press, and was quick to respond to any negative media criticising Hakoah. The club was in a sound financial position by the

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<sup>33</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 October 1956.

<sup>34</sup> *Sun Herald*, 23 September 1956.

end of 1955. There was a credit balance of £200 after paying players bonuses of £195 and total assets of £700.<sup>35</sup>

During this period the club came into conflict with the community's peak secular and sporting organisations, the Jewish Board of Deputies and JASA NSW. Issues of contention were Hakoah's playing of soccer on Friday evenings and Saturdays; Hakoah's flirtation with professionalism, at a time when it remained a member of JASA which was in turn affiliated to the NSWAAA and the makeup of Hakoah's teams which was increasingly less Jewish, because JASA NSW by-laws stated that affiliated bodies should be Jewish. Concern was expressed by the Jewish Board of Deputies and JASA that a team sporting the Star of David on its jerseys had few Jews. In April 1956 the issue of playing sport on the Jewish Sabbath was settled when JASA acknowledged the problem of clubs competing in mainstream competitions. They voted to allow play on Sunday. This resolution ended 30 years of debate in the community over this issue, one in which there was little consensus in the Jewish world.<sup>36</sup> The issue of non-Jewish players representing Hakoah continued to be a sticking point throughout the history of Sydney Hakoah, particularly after the club had moved to open professionalism in the mid-1950s. As a result Hakoah withdrew from the Board of Deputies and JASA in the early 1960s.<sup>37</sup>

The NSWSA rejected Hakoah's application for promotion to the first division in 1957. The Association was dominated by secretary Bill Orr, a Scotsman who had arrived in Australia in the 1930s and had been a soccer administrator for 21 years. As secretary of the Leichhardt Annandale Club he had been one of the leaders of the 1943 soccer rebellion. He was widely credited with guiding New South Wales soccer to a period of prosperity in the 1950s, and was responsible for the purchase of a building in George Street Sydney that housed a licensed club and the Association's offices. Mosely stated that by the mid-1950s, despite the apparent healthy state of soccer in New South Wales, many leaders of the district clubs had lost faith in Orr, because he was considered autocratic. These included Andy Burton, the secretary of Canterbury-Marrickville, who took his club into the new Federation

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<sup>35</sup> R Fisher & P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney, 1938-1994*, p. 37.

<sup>36</sup> R Fisher & P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney, 1938-1994*, p. 37.

<sup>37</sup> R Fisher & P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney, 1938-1994*, p. 52.

when it was formed and became the organisation's first president.<sup>38</sup> Orr and his board of directors were not highly regarded by the migrant-based clubs, who believed these men to be prejudiced against migrants and resentful of their increasing involvement in the game.

Sydney Hakoah officials believed that members of the Association had assured them of promotion at their 1956 celebration dinner. Finding the club rebuffed, Hakoah officials at first protested, then called for a breakaway body to be formed. They found immediate support from those clubs that were discontented with the NSWSA and Orr's leadership. The Association responded by suspending Hakoah. The NSWSF was formed at a meeting chaired by Hakoah's Bill Kadison and held at Walter Sternberg's home on 5 January 1957. It was attended by a large contingent of Sydney sport's media in addition to officials of many leading clubs, minor associations, and several leading players. Hakoah's official history provides a confusing account of the club's involvement. On the one hand it states that 'Hakoah did not officially participate in the deliberations that resulted in the formation of the Federation', but, on the other, it contended that 'Sternberg was not afraid to admit that Hakoah had played a prominent part in helping to establish the breakaway movement'.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps the club wished to down-play Hakoah's role in the soccer upheaval.

The breakaway forces were loudly denounced by the association in what Mosely has described as 'a constant barrage of recriminations against the Federation's migrant core'.<sup>40</sup> Many members of Hakoah interpreted the club's treatment at the hands of the Association as 'raw anti-Semitism'.<sup>41</sup> Association director Tommy Tennant in February 1957 stated that the district club officials in the Federation were 'being dictated to by a bunch of \*\*\*\*\* DPs'.<sup>42</sup> Such inflammatory language was repeated in the press and in *Soccer Weekly News*, the official publication of the Association. An article in June 1957 compared the tactics of the NSWSF to those of

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<sup>38</sup> P Mosely, *A Social History of Soccer in New South Wales 1880-1957*, p. 333.

<sup>39</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney 1938-1994*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>40</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer: A History 1950 to 1990*, p. 36.

<sup>41</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer: A History 1950 to 1990*, p. 36. Mosely's evidence for this claim was obtained from an interview with former Hakoah official Ben Nathan and *Hakoah Star*, vol 11, no. 2, November 1993.

<sup>42</sup> *Sun Herald*, 10 February 1957. A 'DP' was Australian slang for 'Displaced Persons', an official term that was used to describe European refugees who migrated to Australia in the 1940s and 1950s.

the AXIS forces during World War II.<sup>43</sup> In September 1958 the same publication attacked the NSW SF accusing it of lack of control over its matches, resulting in violence. This, it stated, was due to the lack of discipline of the 'new Australian clubs':

An increase of new Australian soccer fans with an attendant drop-off of local soccer fans, at soccer games generally, the roughest soccer competition in the history of NSW, and a great deal of adverse publicity in the persistent attacks on referees by players and spectators. The 'virility' of the Federation in 1958 grew almost into loss of control, born of lack of discipline, mainly of their new Australian clubs.<sup>44</sup>

While the rival factions conducted a public slanging match in the early months of 1957, the first competition organised by the new Federation was the Kennard Cup, staged under floodlights. The Federation claimed to be responsible for the first floodlit football games in Australia, unaware that the first football game played under floodlights had been an Australian Rules match played in Melbourne in August 1879.<sup>45</sup>

William Kennard's sponsorship of the cup was yet another Hakoah link to the Federation story. He attended the inaugural meeting at Sternberg's home, served both the Federation management committee and promotions committee in 1957 and was a registered referee.<sup>46</sup> Kennard was a London East End Jew who served in the RAF as a wireless operator in World War II. He was wounded in a bombing raid in 1939 and later in the war served in Brussels as the allies advanced towards Berlin in 1944-45. A fanatical Charlton Athletic fan, he obtained tickets to the club's consecutive FA Cup final appearances in 1946 (a 4-1 loss to Derby County) and 1947 (a 1-0 win over Burnley).

Kennard migrated with his family to Sydney in 1947. His son Colin described him as 'a "typical Pom" who got away from England to avoid the continuation of

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<sup>43</sup> *Soccer Weekly News*, 15 June 1957.

<sup>44</sup> *Soccer Weekly News*, 6 September 1958.

<sup>45</sup> G Blainey, *A Game of Our Own: The origins of Australian Rules Football*, Information Australia, Melbourne 1990. P. 61.

<sup>46</sup> *NSW Federation of Soccer Clubs: Official Yearbook 1959*, p. 2.



wartime restrictions and rationing'.<sup>47</sup> His involvement in soccer before migration had been as a referee in local amateur soccer. He settled in the eastern suburbs of Sydney where he became involved in the 'rag trade', and then diversified his business interests. By 1960 his interests ranged from the sale of sporting goods to property development.<sup>48</sup> He became one of the first to develop properties in the old inner-city slum areas into commercial space and to build home units in the city's eastern suburbs.<sup>49</sup> He was a skilful salesman, but was also considered generous and a respected community worker.<sup>50</sup> Kennard's business acumen, charitable nature and love of football assured that his sponsorship of the Federation's inaugural competition would be a success. It was his idea to stage the pre-season floodlit matches at Lidcombe Oval in Sydney's western suburbs. *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported in the autumn of 1957 that:

Nearly 4 500 people last night saw the Federation of Soccer Clubs successfully present its first soccer matches. The matches Austral v Auburn and APIA v Hakoah were played under lights at Lidcombe Oval. The standard of the play and the presentation of the matches left little to be desired. Federation officials were delighted with the attendance and the gate was nearly £500.<sup>51</sup>

As patron of this first Federation competition Kennard donated a magnificent silver cup, which bears his name, and a prize of £100 pounds for the winning team. The players in the final of the competition were paid an additional appearance fee of £4 10s — £2 paid by their respective clubs and the remainder made up by the Federation. The competition gave the NSW SF the opportunity to implement new ideas for the promotion of soccer and display some of the top class players it was attracting from Europe.

Kennard would have been gratified when Hakoah won the first Kennard Cup, defeating Lane Cove 5-1 on 27 March 1957 before 4 500 people. Three of the goals were scored by German import Heinz Schussig, and two by Frank Hearne an

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<sup>47</sup> Colin Kennard, letter to the author 15/5/96.

<sup>48</sup> *Soccer World*, vol. 3 no. 22, July 8 1960 carries one of Kennard's advertisements for imported footballs that were available at his shop at 70 King Street Sydney.

<sup>49</sup> Colin Kennard, Interview, 1996.

<sup>50</sup> R Fisher and Peter Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 9.

<sup>51</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 March 1957.

imported English professional. This was an outstanding achievement by Hakoah after its elevation from the second division. Hakoah played impressively in that first NSW SF competition with Schussig's play considered outstanding. He scored a hat-trick in the final and scored two goals in the first round 3-2 victory over APIA.<sup>52</sup> He scored all six goals in the 6-0 defeat of Eastern Suburbs at Arlington Oval in the quarter-finals.<sup>53</sup> The 29-year-old Schussig had represented the Saarland Republic in World Cup games against West Germany and Norway. He was one of the first overseas players recruited by Hakoah in this period.<sup>54</sup> Others were Bill Walsh from Sunderland, goalkeeper Kurt Steiger from Austrian club Admira Wacker and Hungarian player Robert Garay. The club also recruited former England international Jack Gibbons as coach.

Seven of the original eleven Federation first division teams were district teams and one such team, Canterbury, dominated the inaugural season. The top four places on the league table were filled by district teams at the end of the season and two of the top four, Canterbury and Bankstown had been in the leading four in the 1956 NSW SA Southern Division. Hakoah finished sixth, a successful result in the club's first season in a senior competition.

Table 6.5 New South Wales Soccer Federation 1957 First Division Final Table

	Pld	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
Canterbury Marrickville	20	14	4	2	76	30	30
Auburn	20	13	3	4	53	30	30
Bankstown	20	13	4	3	56	26	29
Gladesville Ryde	20	9	5	6	48	35	24
Prague	20	11	7	2	53	45	24
Sydney Hakoah	20	9	8	3	42	30	20
Lane Cove	20	7	8	5	30	45	22
Sydney Austral	20	7	9	4	37	40	18
APIA	20	3	13	4	39	57	10
Concord	20	4	14	2	30	75	10
Eastern Suburbs	20	1	16	3	23	88	5

<sup>52</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 March 1957.

<sup>53</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 March 1957.

<sup>54</sup> *Sun Herald*, 13 March 1957.

The 1958 competition proved even more popular. The Ampol Petroleum Company, which recognised the potential of soccer following the success of the Federation's first season, began its long affiliation as a sponsor. Its chairman William Walkley, became one of the game's admired administrators after he was elected chairman of the ASFA Ltd in 1963. He regarded soccer as 'the sport that could do most to bring old and new Australians together and aid the newcomers' assimilation'.<sup>55</sup> The first four nights of the 1958 competition at Lidcombe Oval attracted 20 858 people. The semi-final double header, Canterbury-Marrickville versus Prague and Hakoah versus Corrimal, produced 'the finest club football seen in Sydney since the war',<sup>56</sup> featuring players of the calibre of Billy Walsh, Jules Forgacs and Schussig of Hakoah, Keith Learmouth of Corrimal and Austrian imports Leo Baumgartner and Karl Jarros of Prague. When Corrimal defeated Auburn before 4 641 fans 'two bus loads and twenty nine car loads of people made the trip from Wollongong for the match'.<sup>57</sup> Hakoah reached the final again with goals by Schussig and Forgacs but lost 4-3 to Canterbury-Marrickville in what was described as a thrilling game at the Sydney Sports Ground. The crowd was reported as 8 028 people but 'Hundreds of people went home when they were unable to obtain parking space in Moore Park'.<sup>58</sup> The Kennard Cup proved an attractive fixture for soccer fans, new and old Australians alike. Kennard's gamble was an inspired one. However, the Kennard Cup was replaced after 1958 when Ampol took over sponsorship of the competition. Ampol raised the prize money to £1 000 and donated a new trophy.<sup>59</sup>

By 1958 most of the leading Sydney clubs had joined the NSW SF. Similar rebellions occurred in the other states. Sydney Hakoah enjoyed its position as a leading club in a league attracting sizeable crowds. Through the efforts of Walter Sternberg and Bill Kadison, Hakoah had played a leading role in revolutionising the game. Harry Lakmaker, who represented Sydney Austral at the NSW SF foundation meeting, joined his fellow Jews at Hakoah in 1958 and later became Federation treasurer, maintaining the Hakoah presence in the organisation's executive.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Sid Grant, *Jack Pollard's Soccer Records*, p. 16.

<sup>56</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 March 1958.

<sup>57</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 March 1958.

<sup>58</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 April 1958.

<sup>59</sup> *Soccer Year Book*, 1959, p. 61.

<sup>60</sup> *Hakoah Star*, vol. 7, no. 9, October 1983.

Soccer paid a heavy price for the breakaway. There were two rival senior competitions in 1957 and 1958, each league containing several of the most powerful clubs with weak clubs making up the numbers. There were many sub-standard matches, not enough competitive games for the top teams in each league and attendances suffered as the loyalties of soccer fans were tested. The negative publicity of a war waged in the press, firmly entrenched soccer in the public imagination as a sport dominated by migrants, ethnic clubs, ethnic officials and ethnic players, even though this was not the case until the 1960s. This view gained momentum even though district clubs such as Canterbury-Marrickville continued to dominate Sydney soccer in the late 1950s. In the Northern and the Illawarra coalfields soccer clubs also continued to be dominant in their region's sporting culture.

Another negative result of the split was Australia's expulsion from FIFA. In 1959 Prague imported Leo Baumgartner and Karl Jaros from FK Austria and several other European players were imported by various NSWFSF clubs. None of these players had clearances from their European clubs and transfers fees had not been paid by the Australian clubs. This put Prague and the other clubs (and the NSWFSF and ASFA Ltd if they allowed the players to play) in breach of FIFA regulations. Baumgartner in his biography, stated that upon his arrival in Australia the NSWFSF secretary Eddie Princi had informed him that 'there had been a breakaway and the NSWFSF had been formed. The new Federation did not belong to FIFA so we would not have any difficulty playing with their teams.'<sup>61</sup> European clubs protested and FIFA banned the players from playing. Mosely explains that the ASFA Ltd found itself trapped, for just six weeks before the players were banned, the NSWFSF had affiliated with the ASFA Ltd and one of its conditions for doing so was that 'all (prospective) disqualifications would be lifted'.<sup>62</sup> The ASFA Ltd was bound to enforce FIFA rules, but if it did so it risked losing the affiliation of the NSWFSF which now consisted of most of the senior clubs. Delegates from the NSWFSF and ASFA Ltd went to Europe and contended to FIFA that the players were genuine immigrants and so should be exempt from the normal transfer rules. FIFA would not accept this and a ban was placed on Australian soccer on 5 April 1959.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> L Baumgartner, *The Little Professor of Soccer*, p. 51.

<sup>62</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer*, p. 41.

<sup>63</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer*, pp. 40-41.

The ban turned Australia into an international soccer pariah, but an attractive destination for journeyman European professionals looking for a better life for their families. NSWFS clubs offered very good wages compared to European clubs still affected by the aftermath of World War II. Australian clubs did not have to pay expensive transfer fees, making higher wages affordable. Alan Garside stated that 'they came out here and saw how great it was ... it would have been ok if they had gone to clubs like Granville, Canterbury or Gladesville or the like but they didn't. There was no transfer fee and that was a problem. It was a bit of a rough time.'<sup>64</sup>

The ban meant Australia was excluded from the qualification rounds of the 1962 World Cup at a time when FIFA was expanding the competition. The NSWFS and the new Federations in the other states did little to promote the national team. Australia did not play an international match after its 2-2 draw with New Zealand in Auckland in August 1958 until its World Cup qualifier against North Korea in Phnom Penh in November 1965. Australia lost the latter match 6-1, illustrating how disastrous this long absence from international football had been.<sup>65</sup>

However, there were some positive aspects to the establishment of the NSWFS, as the Federation era saw an increase in the popularity of the game in schools and junior associations. By 1958, 307 state school teams (primary and secondary) in the greater Sydney area played in regular inter-school competitions. With the addition of denominational schools and others outside the metropolitan area, the number of school teams rose to over 700. The *Soccer Yearbook* in 1958 claimed that 'in one major high school (un-named), 70 out of 140 boys in first year applied to play soccer. The tragedy was that only two teams could be entered'.<sup>66</sup> It soon became clear that the demand for soccer in schools was outgrowing an ability to cater for the sport. The secretary of the New South Wales Junior Soccer Association (NSWJSA) reported that 1 147 teams with over 19 000 registered players had competed the 1958 season.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> G Stock, Interview with Alan Garside, *Studs Up*, November 1997.

<sup>65</sup> Australia needed to win only two matches to qualify for the World Cup finals in England in 1966.

<sup>66</sup> *Soccer Year Book 1958*, NSWFS, Sydney, 1958.

By 1961 the rebel Federations in all the states joined forces to form the Australian Soccer Federation (ASF), which supplanted the ASFA Ltd as the peak body representing soccer in Australia, and it was the ASF that was left to negotiate with FIFA over Australia's expulsion. The money that migrant clubs attracted and the talent they were able to buy contributed to a decline in the district clubs. Former Australian national team captain John Warren who played for Canterbury-Marrickville in the late 1950s stated that:

Suddenly money became a concern ... guys we were playing against were being paid twenty five times what we were receiving ... the money being offered by other clubs ultimately destroyed Canterbury. It was a new era in Australian football and although Canterbury was quite progressive in terms of its promotion of young talent, it was also old-fashioned when it came to money and administration. It relied solely on gate money and fund raising ... when the new migrant-based clubs began springing up ... Canterbury was simply left behind. These new clubs were well supported and financed by businessmen who could see soccer's potential. There was a mismatch that saw the new guard of Australian soccer overwhelm the old guard.<sup>68</sup>

### Problems for Hakoah

Playing in a higher league provided opportunities but also presented threats to Hakoah. While the club achieved on-field success throughout its time in the NSWSF (1957-1976) it became a struggle to maintain the team. First, there was the problem of Hakoah's identity as a Jewish club and its relationship with the Jewish community. There was not enough soccer talent in the Jewish community to supply an all-Jewish team at the senior level. At best one or two local Jewish players of quality emerged from time to time. While the Hakoah administration was comfortable with fielding non-Jews in its teams to represent the community, many Jews criticised the club for this. Andrew Lederer suggested that while this issue was of concern to Austrian and Australian Jews, it wasn't to the Hungarian Jews in the

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<sup>67</sup> *Soccer Year Book 1958*, NSWSF, Sydney, 1958.

<sup>68</sup> J Warren, *Sheilas, Wogs and Poofers; An incomplete biography of Johnny Warren and Soccer in Australia*, Random House, Sydney 2002.

Sydney Jewish community. Because the Jewish football club in Hungary had a small Jewish population to draw from they fielded mostly non-Jewish players. The Hungarians saw no reason why this should not apply in the case of Sydney Hakoah. The important issue for Hungarian Jews was that the club symbolically represented them despite this. He stated:

... it is nothing to do with religion, Jewish player or gentile player, you have the talent or you don't have the talent. See, I came from Hungary ... [only] a few guys like soccer ... I don't know the reason, maybe the game is more manly or needs a more physical approach, but there are not many Jewish players. In Israel there are plenty of Jewish players, not in Australia and one of the reasons is there is too many things to do. The middle class people go to skiing and boating, soccer no longer appeals to everyone.<sup>69</sup>

Lederer was typical of those who became involved in running Sydney Hakoah. He arrived from Hungary in 1957 and soon established his own smallgoods company Presto, which became one of the largest of its kind in Australia. He stated that he had long been content to be a spectator at Hakoah matches but once his business prospered he decided to use his business knowledge for the benefit of the club. While he acknowledged the lack of Jewish players was an issue of concern for some he noted that the team did field some who were outstanding and became crowd favourites, such as Bernie Jacoby, Alan Levinson, Peter Nash and Jules Forgacs. Other Jewish players, Raffi Levy and Gerry Chaldi were purchased from Israel by Hakoah in 1961.

One of Hakoah's outstanding players of the 1950s, Bernie Jacoby, had a different view to Lederer. An English Jew, Jacoby arrived in Australia with his family in 1950, joined Hakoah and made his first grade debut at the age of sixteen. He played throughout Hakoah's rise through the soccer ranks to the first division and was captain in 1957 and 1958. In 1958 he left the club 'following a disagreement over the club's policy of cramming the team with good but usually non-Jewish players'.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Andrew Lederer, Interview, 1994.

Another Jewish player Peter Nash (formally Nachemstein), was born in Germany, but in 1938 his family fled to Shanghai which became home to 10 000 European Jews during the war where sport was an important part of the life of the community.<sup>71</sup> Nash learned football and table tennis in Shanghai. His father Herbert was an official of the *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle* team, referred to by its members as AHV (Alte Herren Verein—Old gentleman's Club).<sup>72</sup> Nash's family arrived in Melbourne in 1949 but soon moved to Sydney where father and son joined the Hakoah club. Nash's parents often staffed the gate for Hakoah and trekked out to 'some incredible places 'supporting the team'.<sup>73</sup> A Sydney newspaper once ran an article referring to 'Aussie boy Peter Nash.' Herbert Nachemstein was 'most amused by this ... what they didn't know was that Nash was a nice Jewish boy, born in Berlin and raised in Shanghai'.<sup>74</sup> Unlike Jacoby, Nash did not have a problem with non-Jewish players representing the club, but he acknowledged great changes during his playing career at Hakoah. Nash stated that:

My span at Hakoah was from 1949 to 1960. In that time there was a dramatic change from a one hundred per cent Jewish team and philosophy to a mixed, best possible team with a Jewish following. I think in the end the Jewish community, the Jewish following didn't quite relate to it all. That's why, beyond the 1960s Maccabi was able to constitute itself as a 100 per cent Jewish club at the amateur level.<sup>75</sup>

Hakoah took advantage of Australia's suspension from FIFA to build a winning team. Not bound by transfer rules and regulations, Hakoah freely recruited locally and overseas. After a disappointing season in 1960 Hakoah imported six Austrian players and two Israeli internationals. It also recruited another Austrian, Karl Jaros, from Sydney club Prague.<sup>76</sup> With this increased player strength Hakoah won the pre-season 'Craven A Cup' and their first New South Wales premiership. Playing at Wentworth Park for the first time they drew aggregate gates of 96 000 (for a

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<sup>70</sup> *Hakoah Star*, vol. 12, no. 2, April-May 1988.

<sup>71</sup> A Hughes, 'Sport and Identity in the Shanghai Jewish Community 1938-1949', *International Sports Studies*, vol. 22, no 1. 2000, pp. 42-53.

<sup>72</sup> Peter Nash, Interview, 1997; N King, 'A Life in Sport: Peter Nash', *Melbourne Jewish News*, 21 September 1962.

<sup>73</sup> H Nachemstein, *Hakoah Star*, vol. 6, no. 9, October 1982.

<sup>74</sup> H Nachemstein, *Hakoah Star*, vol. 6, no 9, October 1982.

<sup>75</sup> Peter Nash, Interview, 1997.

<sup>76</sup> A Dettre, 'Hakoah', unpub. manuscript, Sydney, 1994, p. 4.



match average of 4 364) to their 22 premiership matches. Hakoah defeated Prague 4-1 in the grand final at Henson Park before 18 432 fans.<sup>77</sup> The size of this crowd emphasises the fact that these clubs drew spectators from beyond their own small communities. This was the beginning of Hakoah's dominance of New South Wales and Australian soccer.

Gerry Chaldi was a vital member of the 1961 team and he played an important role in Hakoah's history over the next 25 years as a player, coach and administrator. His purchase along with Raffi Levi was an attempt to ensure Jewish presence in the team. This placated those in the community who criticised the club for purchasing non-Jewish players. Chaldi was born in France but his family moved to Israel when he was a child. He began a professional soccer career in his early teens with Petach Tikva Hapoel and was selected for the Israel national team at the age of seventeen. He played 21 full international matches including the ground breaking match between Israel and the Soviet Union in Moscow in 1956.<sup>78</sup> Chaldi's outstanding play captured the imagination of the Sydney Jewish public, and his experience was vital to Hakoah's first premiership success. He later referred to the 1961 season as a succession of meetings in 'coffee houses in order to meet other Jews who had Hakoah at heart'.<sup>79</sup>

By this time Hakoah were confronted with the cost of maintaining a good professional team. In October 1960 the club announced a debenture scheme, making available 20 000 debentures at £25 each. Through this scheme Hakoah became incorporated as a non proprietary company, a move that drew stern criticism in both the Jewish and secular press, who resented that Hakoah was being run by business professionals.<sup>80</sup> Hakoah's administrators continued to play a significant role in the direction soccer took in Sydney (and Australia). Hakoah's Dr Henry Seamonds was chairman of the NSW SF in 1960 and he was joined by Hakoah's Ben Nathan who became vice president 1961. Walter Sternberg also joined the management committee.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> A Dettre, 'Hakoah', unpub. manuscript, Sydney, 1994, p. 5.

<sup>78</sup> P Scott, *Hakoah Star*, vol 1. no 10, 1977.

<sup>79</sup> P Scott, *Hakoah Star*, vol 1. no 10, 1977.

<sup>80</sup> R Fisher & P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney, 1938-1994*, p. 49.

The late 1950s and early 1960s saw great changes at Hakoah. The club's management by then realised that it could no longer rely on gate money alone for revenue. This realisation led to the dream of the club building its own social club for members and guests, so as to provide a continuing source of revenue to support the professional soccer team. The planned social club was to be similar to the successful leagues clubs operated by rugby league teams.

Hakoah's social functions and meetings were held in a variety of places. The Tarbuth Club in George Street was replaced in the 1950s, first by club rooms at Penkivil Street Bondi and later by Robert Sardy's American Coffee Lounge at Wynyard Station, the new social centre for the club. Asa Briggs and Peter Burke have described the importance of centres of oral communication such as taverns, public houses and coffee houses in European society.<sup>82</sup> The coffee house filled this role for Jews in Vienna. It was also an important site for soccer people in that city. The Jagerhoff Coffee House in Vienna was a meeting place for soccer journalists and the manager of the famous Austrian 'Wunderteam', Hugo Meisel. The coffee house as meeting place for Hakoah players and supporters continued a Viennese tradition. The creation of a significant new social club represented a new venture for Hakoah.

## Conclusions

What was the state of New South Wales soccer at the end of World War II and why did the sport split in 1957? After World War II soccer in New South Wales was in a healthy state. The dominance of factory-based teams in the 1930s had been eclipsed and the state league established in 1943 became popular. District clubs in Sydney, the Illawarra and especially the northern coalfields were important to their communities and working class culture. The home international series against South Africa demonstrated that soccer had retained its power to draw large crowds to international games. There appeared a large untapped market for the code.

When Australia opened its doors to European immigrants large numbers began to enter the country from 1948. These, mostly young men, brought an interest in

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<sup>81</sup> A Dettre, 'Hakoah', unpub. manuscript, Sydney 1994, p.3.

<sup>82</sup> A Briggs and P Burke, *A Social History of the Media from Gutenberg to the Internet*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2002, pp. 30-31.

soccer as part of their cultural baggage. They soon began to attend soccer matches and to form their own clubs. Some who were good enough found places in district grade teams. The government recognised the utility of soccer as an agent of assimilation and encouraged soccer authorities to promote the game amongst the immigrants, at migrant camps and more generally. As a result soccer teams were formed by migrants and in many cases according to nationality or ethnic groupings. Some of those clubs, especially Sydney Austral and Prague began to acquired large followings and moved into ever stronger leagues. Hakoah also benefited from the arrival of immigrants. It too moved up the ladder of New South Wales Soccer.

By the mid-1950s Austral and Prague were able to persuade the NSWSA to admit them to the first division. When Hakoah won the second division in 1956 it too expected promotion but was refused and, as a result, Hakoah challenged the Association on this issue. Several of the district clubs were discontented with the management of soccer by the Association's autocratic secretary Bill Orr. Hakoah and several other clubs orchestrated a breakaway movement resulting in a split in the code in 1957.

During this period Hakoah was transformed from an amateur Jewish multi-sports club to a semi-professional soccer club run by ambitious Jewish businessmen, including many Hungarian Jews. Playing in increasingly tougher leagues, the club was forced to recruit non-Jewish players to compete successfully. This was unpopular with some in the community who believed Hakoah should be an all-Jewish team. Hakoah also had problems with the community hierarchy over playing on the Sabbath and professionalism. Eventually the club resigned from the Jewish Board of Deputies and JASA. However, Hakoah and its supporters received much support in the Jewish press, was well run by committed businessmen, and had developed reasonable core support at the gate. Hakoah's management realised that it needed greater revenue to maintain a competitive team so that by the early 1960s it became incorporated and issued debentures. On the playing field it won its first senior premiership in 1961, relying on a team of mostly European imports and two Israeli players.

While Hakoah became a successful soccer club in the professional ranks, it also encouraged junior soccer in the community, but for the most part it had disassociated itself from Jewish community sport. Nevertheless, it became an

important flagship of the Jewish community. Its highly visible position in a high profile sport marked a complete departure for a Jewish organisation in Australia.

Hakoah played a pivotal role in the establishment of the NSWSF. While it is often taken for granted that 'ethnic clubs' took over soccer in the 1950s, the traditional district clubs persisted for some time. The district clubs were dominant in the senior league in the 1950s and some such as Canterbury and Corrimal (later South Coast United) would have some success in the 1960s. However, as discussed in the following chapter, Hakoah and some of the other migrant-based and ethnic-based clubs dominated the game by the end of the 1960s.

While some regarded the Federation takeover as backward looking and detrimental to soccer, Hakoah and the Federation championed many new innovations such as Friday night football under lights and greater acceptance of professionalism, which were important forward looking initiatives.

Figure 6.1 William Kennard presenting the Kennard Cup to the captain of Canterbury-Marrickville after the 1958 final.



## Chapter Seven

### Sydney Hakoah 1961-1987

'Later the Jewish player at Hakoah became the "Salon Jude", the Jew you invited because you didn't have any Jews'.<sup>1</sup>

Between 1961 and 1987, Sydney Hakoah became Australia's most successful soccer club. Yet in March 1987, one game into the NSL season, president Frank Lowy announced that the team would be disbanded and Hakoah would take no further part in professional soccer. This chapter will discuss the rise of Sydney Hakoah from state league champions in 1961 to Australia's best performed soccer team in the 1970s and 1980s, and its demise as a professional club. Hakoah's ambivalent relationship with the Sydney Jewish community, with the club's on-field success matched by steadily declining support at the gate, is an important part of this discussion. The chapter also considers the influence of Hakoah and many of its administrators on the direction of Australian soccer, especially Hakoah's role in the formation of the NSL in 1977.

Hakoah's success gave, for the first time, an identifiable Jewish organisation in Sydney a high public profile in an era when ethnically-based clubs dominated soccer. Playing as a Jewish club in a league dominated by ethnically European clubs, meant that Hakoah was forced to confront directly the issue of anti-Semitism. Political developments outside of Australia also saw the club's premises become the target of a terrorist attack.

This period also saw the founding of the Hakoah's licensed social club to support the professional soccer team. However, it was founded as a separate organisation that became a focal point of communal activity, usurping this role from the Maccabean Hall.

The following questions will be addressed in this chapter. What was the relationship of Hakoah with the Sydney Jewish community during this period? Why was the community reluctant to support a professional team in the NSL at the gate, despite Hakoah's outstanding success? Why did Frank Lowy disband the professional football club while the licensed social club continued as a

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<sup>1</sup> G Shipp, Interview, 1997.

flagship organisation in the Jewish community? Finally, what was the legacy of the Hakoah Soccer Club for Sydney Jewry and professional soccer?

### Success in the NSWSF 1961-1969

The 1961 season was one of unprecedented success for Hakoah. Wentworth Park provided an excellent playing surface for the players and was located closer to the centres of Jewish population than Erskineville Oval. It was also a completely enclosed ground, making it impossible for spectators to observe games without paying as they had been able to at Erskineville Oval.<sup>2</sup> A negative aspect of Wentworth Park was that the soccer pitch was surrounded by a greyhound racing track, and floodlight poles around the track interrupted the view of the playing field, remaining an irritant to spectators throughout Hakoah's tenure of the ground. Nevertheless the move to Wentworth Park saw an increase in spectators attending Hakoah's matches. Andrew Dettre claimed that this was due to 1961 'being possibly one of the best soccer seasons ever seen in Sydney ... people were flocking to see the top teams in action'.<sup>3</sup>

Hakoah reached the pre-season Ampol Cup final but was defeated by Prague 2-1 before 17 500 spectators at the Sydney Sports Ground. Ampol's managing director William Walkley stated that he 'saw soccer as the sport that would do most to bring old and new Australians together and aid in the newcomer's assimilation'.<sup>4</sup>

Walter Sternberg was determined to build Hakoah into a first class team and to use the loophole provided by Australia's exclusion from FIFA to do so.<sup>5</sup> Sternberg assembled a squad consisting of five Austrian internationals: Heinz Weinzel (F K Admira), Victor Mach (Weiner AC), Adolf Blutsch (F K Austria), Peter Hrnčir (F K Austria) and Karl Jaros (F K Austria). They were augmented by Israeli internationals, Gerry Chaldi and Rafi Levy (Petach Tikva Hapoel); one Scottish international, Jock Aird; one New Zealand international, Ron Kearns and one Australian international, Ron Neill. The club paid transfer fees to

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<sup>2</sup> Spectators unwilling to pay gate money at Erskineville Oval could observe matches through its wire fence. This is not possible at Wentworth Park.

<sup>3</sup> A Dettre, 'Sydney Hakoah', p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> S Grant, *Jack Pollard's Soccer Records*, pp. 16-17. William Walkley was born in New Zealand in 1896 and was associated with Ampol from its foundation in 1936. He became president of the ASF in 1963 and was one of soccer's ablest administrators. He was knighted in 1967. S Grant, *Jack Pollard's Soccer Records*, p. 285.

<sup>5</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer*, pp. 39-43.

Hapoel in order to include Jewish players in the team, believing this would attract more spectators from the Jewish community. The addition of these players enriched a squad that already had significant numbers of imports such as Hungarians Jules Forgacs and Jeno Bosansky, Austrian goalkeeper Kurt Spiegel and English striker Frank Hearn. It is clear that religion, ethnicity or race had little to do with Hakoah's player acquisitions. The club's playing staff was multi-national as were its administrators and spectators. This highlights the inadequacy of the popular term 'ethnic club' in describing Hakoah. A more accurate description is that of 'migrant-based club' used by Dettre to describe Hakoah, Prague and Sydney Austral of the 1950s.<sup>6</sup>

Some commentators regarded Hakoah's 1961 team as the finest team ever assembled in Australian club soccer, though it did not win the league championship.<sup>7</sup> Hakoah finished third on the premiership table but qualified for the grand final, where the club claimed its first senior championship defeating Canterbury 4-1. The club also won the financially rewarding Craven A Cup. Mid-way through the season newspapers reported that the club was in financial trouble. Sternberg called a meeting, revealing weekly expenses of £300 including expensive retainers to the Israeli stars. He stressed the need to sell debentures in the club otherwise players would be sold. Supporters reacted positively to the debenture scheme, averting financial trouble.<sup>8</sup> This was the forerunner of many schemes to finance the Hakoah professional soccer team.

In 1962 Hakoah finished second behind the Hungarian community based club Budapest (later St George Budapest) on the league table. However, Hakoah defeated the Budapest 4-2 in the grand final. The 1962 season marked a high point for the NSW SF. Without any representative or tour matches 835 000 people attended soccer matches (including finals) in Sydney, with average weekly gates of 18 640.<sup>9</sup> Soccer received more coverage than before because the number of soccer spectators demonstrated to newspaper proprietors that there was a profitable new market. Mosely has noted that newspapers assigned additional journalists to cover soccer, though some did not understand the game, its nuances and its language. It was increased coverage nevertheless.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> A Dettre, 'Sydney Hakoah', p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> P Moon and P Burns, *The Asia — Oceania Soccer Handbook*, (np), Oamaru NZ, 1985, p. 207; P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer*, p. 98.

<sup>8</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 50.

<sup>9</sup> *Soccer World Annual*, Sydney, 1965, P Mosely et al (eds.), *Sporting Immigrants*, p. 158.

<sup>10</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer*, p. 47.

ABC radio began coverage of soccer games introducing the mellow and educated tones of Martin Royal. His commentaries contrasted with the colour, excitement and multi-lingual noise of the terraces. His benign and smiling face featured in advertisements in soccer programs at matches all around Sydney. The famous (in soccer circles) green paper *Soccer World*, which began publication in 1957, provided up-to-date information on clubs and players as well as statistics from Australia and international news. *Soccer World* was sold at all suburban grounds and newsagents throughout the city. Hakoah members such as Bill Kadison, who served as NSWSF publicity officer, were prominent in the new media machine that promoted soccer. Gone were the apologetic 'how soccer is played' articles from programs and yearbooks. They were replaced by a more positive approach that promoted the best features of the clubs and its star players.

The growth of soccer and consequent media attention saw many of Australia's largest companies enlist as sponsors. Australia's largest tobacco company, W D & H O Wills, sponsored the Ascot Cup in 1959 donating £1 000. The final of this competition attracted 10 500 people to Redfern Oval, and the sponsors handed a packet of cigarettes to each spectator as they entered the ground. The NSWSF and its clubs engaged the business community. *Soccer Annual* and the programs of the various clubs carried advertisements from companies such as the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Ansett ANA and Mick Simmons, a sportswear chain which had an association with soccer going back to the 1920s.<sup>11</sup>

Mosely has noted that the new organisers of soccer had 'business acumen' and were 'politically savvy'. Hakoah's Ben Nathan, Henry Seamonds and Walter Sternberg, in addition to Bill Kadison, were good examples.<sup>12</sup> They worked hard both for their own club and the NSWSF, creating an organisation with a modern business outlook, that operated efficiently from 1957 to 1963. Sternberg resigned as Hakoah president in 1963 while Henry Seamonds died in February of that year, depriving soccer of two of its hardest working and most innovative administrators.

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<sup>11</sup> For examples see *Soccer World Annual*, 1961-1970.

<sup>12</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer*, p. 53.



Following the grand final success of the previous two seasons, Hakoah finished in ninth place in a twelve team league in 1963, winning only one of its home matches. There was some success late in the season when Hakoah won the Federation Cup, a knock-out competition, defeating South Coast United 2-1 in the final at the E S Marks Field. Despite its lowly finish in the league, Hakoah attracted its record home crowd for a regular round match when 18 185 attended a game at Wentworth Park against Pan Hellenic. However, this figure is misleading. The match was part of a double header also featuring APIA versus Yugal. This and other high Hakoah crowd figures were achieved in matches involving the well-supported teams such as Pan-Hellenic (the club's name was later changed to Sydney Olympic) and APIA. During the 1960s and 1970s it was the Italian and Greek community based clubs that formed the backbone of spectator support throughout Australia.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, by 1961 Hakoah had built on its core Jewish support by fielding excellent teams. Dettre stated that during this era Hakoah attracted 'many neutral spectators on top of their ardent camp followers, keen to see a great team in action'.<sup>14</sup> There were only four Jews in the senior Sydney Hakoah squad in the early 1960s, Israeli imports Gerry Chaldi and Rafi Levy and local players Bernie Gold and Robert Fekete. Chaldi, Gold and Levi played in the final of the Federation Cup in 1963.

Hakoah rebuilt its team in 1964 and, after a disastrous start to the competition, finished seventh out of twelve. It imported several British players but only Welsh international Trevor Edwards was a success. To rectify this situation the president Karl Rodney purchased the aging Austrian Leo Baumgartner, who had previously shunned Hakoah's advances.<sup>15</sup> The recruitment of Baumgartner, and the terms of his contract led to the resignation of president Pozniak and his committee in 1965. Baumgartner stated that his Hakoah contract was a personal one with Karl Rodney and that Rodney had guaranteed certain payments. When Pozniak became president he assured Baumgartner that his contract would be honoured, but that he would have to be paid in instalments. Baumgartner believed that he was caught in a power struggle between the Rodney and Pozniak factions for control of the club. He claimed that the ill-feeling over his contract, as well as injury, resulted in his poor performances. Eventually Baumgartner was paid, but was called to account for his performance and, amid considerable acrimony, he was offered a transfer to St George. He decided to

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<sup>13</sup> S Georgakis, *Sport and the Australian Greek: an historical study of ethnicity, gender and youth*, Standard Publishing House, Sydney, 2000, p. 190.

<sup>14</sup> A Dettre, 'Sydney Hakoah' p. 5.

<sup>15</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 146.

retire instead. Writing about this period Baumgartner was less than complimentary about Hakoah claiming that 'Hakoah ... had to win otherwise there was no support for it, financially or on the ground. If we won it was lavished on us; if we lost we were left to our own devices'.<sup>16</sup> The club's official history has sanitised this episode. Although Baumgartner, played only a handful of games for Hakoah, the history referred to him as 'one of Hakoah's star players of the 1960s'.<sup>17</sup>

Hakoah performed disastrously in 1965 and was on the bottom of the ladder for much of the season for the first time since World War II. Improved performance came after the coach Brian Birch was sacked and replaced by Tiko Jelisavic (later Australia's first World Cup coach). Hakoah didn't lose a further match. Robert Fekete was the only regular player out of 28 who was Jewish. Other Jewish players who played occasionally were Bernie Gold (one first team appearance) and Martin Lissing who was signed from Prague. Goalkeeper Peter Fuzes, who made his debut, became one of Hakoah's greatest players in later seasons.

While aggregate Sydney soccer attendances had risen to 827 000 in 1964, they plummeted to 670 000 in 1965. The revolution in the game in Sydney seemed to have run out of steam. The editorial of *Soccer World Annual* identified endemic problems which had not been solved by the 1957 split:

The administration of soccer left a great deal to be desired. Club control, in most cases, proved to be a resounding failure as the incredible amount of petty jealousies and red tape stifled whatever original ideas might have been produced. In Australia we are still a frighteningly long way away from possessing top administrators with the right qualities, genuine love of the code, ability to plan and execute progressive moves and remaining detached from affiliations.

The standard of matches fell during 1965 and most competitions have become dreary almost tedious affairs. In Sydney and Melbourne the majority of teams rely almost exclusively on imported British players and only one or two clubs have had the courage to reach out to the local

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<sup>16</sup> L Baumgartner, *The Little Professor of Soccer*, p. 94.

<sup>17</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 58.

youngsters. Those who have will certainly reap the benefits in years to come.<sup>18</sup>

An interesting feature of the editorial was a comment on the over-use of British imports. It was a remarkable feature of Australian soccer well into the 1970s, that journeymen and cast-off British players were often given precedence over local players.<sup>19</sup> It is ironic in terms of the 'wogball' stereotype of Australian soccer popular in this era, that many of the ethnically-based clubs fielded teams almost entirely made up from British and Australian players. *Soccer World* also criticised the state of Sydney soccer grounds. Most suburban grounds were considered antiquated and with poor facilities unacceptable to a more discerning public.<sup>20</sup>

An analysis of the NSW SF first division in the 1960s casts doubt on the view that there was an ethnic take-over of soccer in 1957. Statistics indicate that from the league's inception in 1957 until the 1968 season, a number of district based clubs persisted successfully. Table 7.1 demonstrates that Canterbury, Auburn, Bankstown and Gladesville performed creditably from 1957 to 1962. Corrimal Rangers had two good seasons in 1958 and 1959 before finishing eleventh in 1960, prompting a name change to South Coast United to broaden the club's appeal in its region. In 1963 South Coast finished third on the ladder and demonstrated the strength of district clubs when it defeated APIA 4-1 before a capacity crowd of almost 32 000 (the police turning thousands away) at the Sydney Sports Ground. South Coast also won premierships in 1965 and 1969. District clubs were still a force in the 1960s though APIA, St George Budapest and Hakoah became increasingly dominant. APIA was clearly the benchmark team of the 1960s.

However, two of the oldest and best-supported district clubs, Leichhardt-Annandale and Granville, were roughly treated by the NSW SF in 1958 and 1960. Leichhardt-Annandale had been the NSW SA's staunchest supporter in the war with the NSW SF. When unification was achieved the NSW SF excluded

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<sup>18</sup> *Soccer World Annual*, Soccer World, Sydney, 1965, p. 3.

<sup>19</sup> In the 1970s I witnessed this personally at my club Granville, (which had won its way back into first division in 1974). Young Australian-bred players were frustrated by being held back because of British players, who were no more skilful but older and less fit, were continually given preference. A common refrain among the younger fellows was 'all you need is a Scottish accent and be able to talk a good game and you get a first grade spot'.

<sup>20</sup> *Soccer World Annual*, Soccer World, Sydney, 1965, p. 3.

them in an action seen by many as revenge. Granville also appeared a victim of Federation politics. According to the club historian:

1960 was the darkest year in Granville's long and colourful history. The federation reduced the league from fourteen to twelve teams, relegated three teams and promoted one. Granville finished twelfth and was demoted. After that it became increasingly apparent to club officials that division two status was sapping the club of life giving gate money.<sup>21</sup>

Granville remained in division two until the 1970s when it won promotion, but was never able to regain its glory days. The exclusion of Leichhardt-Annandale and Granville may have alienated many Australian supporters of the game.

Figure 7.2 Sydney Hakoah's John Watkiss shoot for goal against APIA at Lambert Park in August 1974. Hakoah won 1-0.



<sup>21</sup> *Granville Parramatta SFC Yearbook 1977, The Club, Sydney 1977.*

Table 7.1. Performance of clubs in NSWSF First Division 1957-1968  
 Number indicates the place each club finished in the competition.

	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
APIA	9	8	2	2	6	3	2	1	3	1	1	3
*Auburn,	2	3	6	4	9	9	12	—	—	—	—	—
*Bankstown	3	7	12	8	8	6	10	10	—	—	—	—
*Balgownie	—	—	13	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
*Canterbury	1	2	5	3	2	11	7	12	—	—	6	9
*Concord	10	11	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Corinthians	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11	—	10	—	—
*Corrimal Rangers/ South Coast United	—	1	3	11	10	8	3	3	1	4	11	7
Croatia	—	—	—	—	—	—	11	9	7	7	3	5
*#Cumberland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	8	9	12	—
*^Eastern Suburbs	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
*Gladesville	4	6	8	5	11	10	5	—	—	—	—	—
*Granville	—	—	10	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hakoah	6	5	4	9	3	2	9	7	6	2	5	1
*•Lane Cove	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
*Manly	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
*Manly Warringah	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
Melita Newtown	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
*•North Side	—	10	7	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pan Hellenic	—	—	—	—	4	7	4	6	9	5	4	2
•Polonia North Side	—	—	—	—	5	12	—	—	10	—	8	6
Prague	5	4	1	1	1	5	1	4	5	6	7	4
St. George Budapest	—	—	11	6	7	1	6	2	2	3	2	11
Sydney Austral	8	9	9	10	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
*^Villawood	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Yugal	—	—	—	—	—	4	8	5	4	8	9	8

\* District based clubs.

• Lane Cove merged with North Side and became known as North Side EPT. In 1961 this club merged with Polonia and became Polonia North Side.

# Cumberland was formed with the merging of Auburn and Gladesville in 1964.

^ Eastern Suburbs and Villawood disbanded in 1957 and 1958 respectively.

While Hakoah finished sixth in the League in 1965, the club confirmed its reputation as a cup winning club<sup>22</sup> when it won the post-season Henry Seamonds Trophy, defeating Pan Hellenic in a match played in driving rain at Wentworth Park before only 2 000 spectators. Winning this competition qualified Hakoah to represent New South Wales in the Australia Cup. This competition, which was inaugurated by the ASF in 1962, brought together representatives from each state. Hakoah, with one only Jewish player, goalkeeper Peter Fuzes, defeated its Sydney rival APIA in an all Sydney two-legged<sup>23</sup> final by 3-2 (1-1 and 2-1).<sup>24</sup> Hakoah's best gate for 1965 was 5 383 against APIA, one of the best supported clubs in the league. Hakoah once again had difficulty meeting its financial obligations. The season was also notable for the visit of Israeli team Hapoel Tel Aviv, which Hakoah defeated 7-1.<sup>25</sup>

Two significant figures, Frank Lowy and Sam Fiszman, gained positions of power at Hakoah in 1965. Former Prague and Hakoah president Karl Rodney was also appointed to the soccer management committee. This was a new initiative by the club and this committee was given complete control of players and team selection. The division of powers in the club, between business and football management, caused much infighting. Hakoah was criticised in the Jewish press for its perceived attempts to buy its way out of trouble. This was seen by many as imprudent financial management.<sup>26</sup>

### Frank Lowy

Lowy was the most important of these three figures. He was born on 22 October 1930 in Filakova, in the southern region of Czechoslovakia. After the German army began to round up Jews in that region in 1942, Lowy's family moved to Budapest. However, the Hungarian Horthy regime fell in 1944, to be replaced by

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<sup>22</sup> In soccer the term 'cup competition' refers to progressive knock out competitions, such as the English F A Cup. These are 'sudden death' fixtures. Play in these fixtures is usually more open, attacking and exciting than in league matches. Often, teams that appear to have a certain 'cup fighting' quality, or special ability to win such competitions are referred to as 'good cup teams'. Many clubs acquire a reputation as a 'cup team'.

<sup>23</sup> The term 'two-legged' fixture is a common usage in soccer. Such fixtures are common in soccer knock-out competitions around the world where each teams hosts a home match. Scores are added together to determine the winner. If the combined scores are equal, then goals scored away are doubled. This replaced a practice in European competitions of the 1950s and 1960s where the toss of a coin was used to determine the result in a two-legged fixture.

<sup>24</sup> A Dettre, 'Sydney Hakoah', p. 6, R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, pp. 57, 147.

<sup>25</sup> A Dettre, 'Sydney Hakoah', p. 6, *A History*, R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 57.

<sup>26</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 57.

the pro-Nazi Fascist Nyilas Party under Ferenc Szálasi. Lowy's father Hugo was arrested and deported to Auschwitz where he died. Lowy and the remainder of his family were fortunate to survive the war. The Russian occupation of Budapest in January 1945 brought an end to the destruction of its Jewish population. In 1946 Lowy journeyed to Palestine, and in 1948 he joined the army and served throughout the Israeli War of Independence from November 1947 to May 1948. He then decided to emigrate to Australia where his mother, brother and sister had settled.<sup>27</sup>

After Lowy arrived in Sydney on Australia Day (26 January) 1952, he was employed in various jobs before work on a smallgoods delivery truck brought him into contact with John Saunders (originally Schwartz), a Hungarian Jew. Saunders owned a delicatessen at Town Hall Station. Lowy and Saunders became partners opening a shop near Blacktown Station in Sydney's western suburbs. With a sizeable number of European immigrants there was a ready market for a continental delicatessen. Lowy and Saunders soon diversified their business interests by buying pockets of land in the west which they sub-divided and re-sold. Having read of the success of large shopping malls in the United States, they developed the idea in Australia. They formed the Westfield Corporation and built the Westfield Plaza in Blacktown, which opened in June 1959.<sup>28</sup> By the 1990s, Westfield had operations around the globe. By then Lowy's personal worth was \$550 million.<sup>29</sup> Lowy was rated as Australia's second richest man, with a personal fortune of \$4.2 billion in 2002, by *Business Review Weekly*, in its annual 'Rich 200' list.<sup>30</sup>

Lowy came into contact with Sydney Hakoah in the early 1950s when he met club captain Bernie Jacoby who was the son of one of his early employers in Australia. He began to attend Hakoah's matches and was invited to join the committee in 1955. Initially he was content to stay in the background. Lowy's biographer Jill Margo stated that 'Hakoah offered Frank an easy and pleasurable route to becoming integrated into the new country. It gave him a sense of belonging to a community and provided the opportunity to create some standing in the community.'<sup>31</sup> When he became deeply involved in Hakoah he applied all his business acumen and drive to the task of running the club. Lowy

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<sup>27</sup> J Margo, *Frank Lowy, Pushing the Limits*, Harper Collins, Sydney, 2000, pp. 4-87.

<sup>28</sup> J Margo, *Frank Lowy, Pushing the Limits*, pp. 4-87.

<sup>29</sup> W D Rubenstein, *Jews in Australia*, p. 361.

<sup>30</sup> *Business Review Weekly*, vol. 19, no. 23, 23 May 2002.

<sup>31</sup> J Margo, *Frank Lowy, Pushing the Limits*, p. 108.

is symbolic of the success of post-World War II Jewish immigrants. Of Australia's top 200 wealthiest individuals in 1990, 53 were Jewish.<sup>32</sup>

Hakoah maintained a stable side during the 1966 season finishing second on the ladder. Only nineteen players were used during the season and five of the squad played every match compared to just two in 1965. *Soccer World* praised Hakoah and suggested it was unlucky that APIA were so good that season. Hakoah were successful in the play-offs where, by way of innovation, the top four series was played as a round robin, the two teams with the most points meeting in the grand final. Hakoah lost its first match of the series 2-1 to APIA but then defeated South Coast United 3-2 and St George 5-0 to advance to the grand final. The match at the Sydney Sports Ground was played in appalling conditions with the players ankle deep in mud and it attracted only 7 750 spectators — the lowest grand final crowd in the Federation's history. Hakoah adapted to the conditions best and won 2-1 though the winning goal scored by G Hood was hotly disputed. Two Jews, Fuzes and Fekete appeared in the Hakoah lineup.

League crowds declined in 1966: the season total of 560 000 was 110 000 short of 1965 and 230 000 less than in 1964. Hakoah's best home gate was 7 200 for its match with Pan Hellenic. The season aggregate attendance was a mere 46 400 for eighteen games, an average of only 2 577.

#### 7.2. Hakoah home attendance record 1964 to 1970

Year	Aggregate home attendance	Average weekly home gate
1961	96 000	4 363
1964	79 500	4 416
1965	46 300	2 572
1966	46 400	2 577
1967*	52 300	2 377
1968	Unavailable	
1969	66 000	3000
1970	73 000	3318
1971	71 000	3227

Source: Figures compiled from *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs Soccer Football Club Annual Reports 1970, 1971, NSW Soccer Year Book 1960-61 and Soccer World Annual 1962 to 1968*. \* League increased from 10 to 12 teams.

<sup>32</sup> W D Rubenstein, *The Jews in Australia*, p. 346.



Hakoah finished the 1967 season outside the top four on goal difference, having lost only six matches during the season. Fekete (19 matches), Fuzes (12) and Gold (1) provided the Jewish content in the team. Hakoah's official history stated that there was criticism of the club's management at the 1967 AGM:

because members were dissatisfied with the number of team transfers which had occurred early in the season, when nearly a whole team was transferred. It was felt that together the transferred players could have beaten many club sides.<sup>33</sup>

An examination of the team rosters for 1966 and 1967, reveals that the criticism was unjustified, with the only significant loss being the ageing Herbert Ninaus. Of the twelve players that played more than seven games in 1966, the only other loss was D Reid who played only seven first team matches. Of the seven players who played less than seven matches only three (G Coulshed, D Smith and C Thomson) left the club. In other words, the first choice team of 1966, with the exception of Ninaus, remained intact. The discontent at the AGM was probably because it was revealed that failure to make the top four had cost the club \$18 000, leaving it with a deficit of \$10 000.<sup>34</sup>

Hakoah made one of the most significant signings in its history for the 1967 season when it paid Adamstown Rosebud \$5 600 for Ray Baartz, a product of Newcastle junior soccer. Baartz went to Manchester United on a scholarship and spent two years there before returning to Australia to play for Adamstown Rosebud in the Northern New South Wales State League. He was one of the most talented players of his generation and played a leading role in the dominance of Hakoah in subsequent seasons.<sup>35</sup>

The 1968 season was one of Hakoah's best and laid the foundations of its dominance of the game for the next eighteen years.<sup>36</sup> Having won the pre-season Ampol Cup 3-2 against Melbourne Croatia, Hakoah dominated the premiership competition, topping the table for the first time in its history. The

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<sup>33</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 58.

<sup>34</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 58.

<sup>35</sup> A Dettre, 'Sydney Hakoah', p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> Many soccer writers and fans believe that the 1968 team was Hakoah's best ever due to the number of competitions it won, the quality of its players and the style with which it played. However, it is difficult to compare the 1968 team with the team developed by Eddie Thompson in the 1980s and which played in a tougher national competition, with many of its players full-time professionals.

club lost only two games during the season and defeated Pan Hellenic in the grand final before 22 000 spectators at the Sydney Sports Ground. The club then won the Australia Cup defeating Melbourne Hakoah 6-1 over two legs (3-0 and 3-1). When the two Jewish clubs met, Sydney Hakoah included two Jewish players, Fuzes and Fekete in its side.

This success was not repeated in 1969 with Hakoah finishing third in the League. Although the 1969 season failed to live up to the achievements of 1968, it marked the beginning of new phase in the club's history with Frank Lowy assuming the presidency.

### **The Social Club**

Despite the success of Hakoah throughout the 1960s, finance remained the club's biggest problem. It was obvious to the committee that the club could not survive on gate money alone. While developing the club, Hakoah officials looked with envy at the money generated by the licensed social clubs, complete with rows of poker machines, associated with rugby league teams such as St George. Several soccer clubs in the league had also established licensed social clubs to provide additional income to gate money and other sources, such as fund-raising dinners and raffles. As early as 1957 *Soccer World* had reported that Hakoah management wanted to establish a social club, '... Hakoah ... is negotiating for land in the eastern suburbs with a view to building its own ground and club house'.<sup>37</sup>

In the early 1960s a bid was made for Randwick Golf Club's former premises on the corner of High and Botany Streets, Randwick. The Golf Club had been resumed for the construction of the University of New South Wales' School of Medicine,<sup>38</sup> but the clubhouse was located on a block of land on the opposite side of the road, outside the boundaries of Randwick Golf Club. Several organisations including Hakoah and Prague Soccer Clubs bid for the building, but eventually the University decided to purchase it.<sup>39</sup>

In mid-1964, under the presidency of Maurice Pozniak, the formal decision was made to establish a social club. In a crucial decision with great implications for

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<sup>37</sup> *Soccer World*, 31 August 1957.

<sup>38</sup> P O'Farrell, *UNSW, A Portrait: the University of New South Wales 1949-1999*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 1999, p. 88.

<sup>39</sup> *Tharunka*, vol. 6, no. 2, March 1960.

the Hakoah's future, the club's solicitors advised that the social club should be a separate entity from the football club, reasoning that it was unusual for liquor licenses to be granted to sports clubs. The stated aims of the social club were to provide a home for Hakoah football club (its fans, players and their friends and family), create a social and cultural home for the Jewish community in the widest sense and provide a source of funds for soccer and other sporting activities.<sup>40</sup>

Karl Rodney was elected president for the second time in 1968. Rodney announced plans for the establishment of the Hakoah Social Club after supporters of Hakoah had purchased the Odeon Cinema building in Roscoe Street Bondi. The new owners were to lease the premises to Hakoah as a social club for five years. Rodney indicated that the scheme required \$100 000 immediately and a further \$70 000 would be necessary to re-model the building.

When Frank Lowy was elected president in November 1969, he brought with him a new board of directors and plans to change the governance of the club. Previously, any person who donated \$100 could become a director, resulting in a large and unwieldy board. Lowy proposed a nine-man board with membership based on contributions of \$5 000. Funds collected were used for the creation of the social club, which required additional borrowing of \$45 000. The promised capital from Lowy's proposed new board members, swayed the club membership — some of whom were strongly opposed — and his team was elected. Lowy chose Andrew Lederer as his vice-president. Lederer was charged with running the soccer team on a day to day basis together with Tibor Kalman, a Hungarian Jew who had been involved with the soccer team for many years.<sup>41</sup>

Following agreement on the lease of the Roscoe Street property, Hakoah embarked on a long-running battle with Waverley Council to have the new purpose of the building and proposed renovation approved. Lowy also battled with the New South Wales Liquor Licensing Board to obtain a license. On Anzac Day (25 April) 1970, Lowy was able to announce that Waverley Council had granted approval for work to begin on the new club. The club opened for business in November 1970, though without a liquor licence. Other local clubs objected to Hakoah's liquor licence application on the grounds that the area was already well catered for. However, the application was eventually refused due to lack of parking. This problem was overcome when Lowy sent Lederer to

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<sup>40</sup> *Hakoah Fiftieth Anniversary*, Hakoah Club, Sydney, 1989. p. 2.

<sup>41</sup> J Margo, *Frank Lowy, Pushing the Limits*, p. 109.

Melbourne to persuade Hamilton Sleigh, owner of Golden Fleece Service Stations, to allocate to Hakoah 50 car spaces at his Bondi service station.<sup>42</sup> The liquor licence was granted in January 1971 and the club began trading as a licensed club in the next month. It began with 400 members who paid a \$15 joining fee as well as \$15 annual fee. A further 97 members became Foundation Members paying \$250 each.

The first annual report of the newly constituted Hakoah-Eastern Suburbs Soccer Football Club in October 1970 showed an income of \$53 680 with \$24 964 from gate takings. With the soccer expenditure amounting to \$49 598, it was apparent that the soccer team was now dependent on social club income. Subsequent annual reports made it clear that the social club underwrote the soccer club.

Table 7.3 Hakoah-Eastern Suburbs Soccer Football Club Income and Expenditure 1970-1974

Year	Revenue	Total Expenditure	Gate Money	Players Wages	Cost of Soccer	Surplus
1970	53 860	57 028	23 964	23 732	49 598	(3 168)
1971	309 318	198 584	20 710	58 329	59 312	51 422
1972	437 447	268 982	17 177	73 293	96 218	168 465
1973	530 473	241 475	22 148	82 092	99 991	41 473
1974	686 203	325 911	16 896	74 162	106 671	112 569
1975	894 998	523 926	13 229	71 900	100 681	107 368
1976	2 860 588	2 079 267	30 766	85 400	109 231	5 577

Source: Figures compiled from *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs Soccer Football Club Annual Reports 1970 to 1976*.

Table 7.3 demonstrates the dramatic effect the social club had on the football club's income. Although running the social club brought new costs, it is clear that there was a substantial increase in the financial commitment to the soccer team, with players' wages more than trebling in the space of five years. Revenue from gate money diminished, becoming a small part of the club's income.<sup>43</sup>

The Roscoe Street club was a success, but it soon became evident to Lowy and his board that its size would limit the ability to expand membership and services.

<sup>42</sup> J Margo, *Frank Lowy: Pushing the Limits*, pp. 114-115.

<sup>43</sup> *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs SFC Annual Reports 1970-1974*, The Club, Sydney, 1970-1974.

The five- year lease also meant that there was no guarantee of permanency. Hakoah's *Fiftieth Anniversary History* stated that:

The directors started thinking of the long-term future of Hakoah, and this inevitably involved plans for a building which the club would construct and own — a building which would provide every facility and amenity that should be identified with a leading sporting and social club, a focal point for communal activity for people of all ages and interests.<sup>44</sup>

Hakoah announced in April 1972 that it had purchased a property in Hall Street Bondi, and a \$1 million development plan was proposed for a new club. The project was to be funded by a mortgage of half its value backed by a debenture scheme with units of \$1 000 with 9 per cent interest over five years.<sup>45</sup> The 1973 annual report stated that the foundation stone had been laid for the club's new premises and that 'the new building ... will provide a unique sporting and social complex for Hakoah and the community at large'.<sup>46</sup> By mid-1974 the debenture scheme had raised \$390 000 and Robert Sardy, who had owned the American Coffee Shop that had been a Hakoah meeting place for many years, was appointed general manager to run the project.<sup>47</sup> The new club was officially opened on 30 November 1975 by New South Wales Premier Tom Lewis. By that time membership was almost 3 000.<sup>48</sup> A 'Gold Star' membership scheme had also been launched to attract further funds.<sup>49</sup>

The sharp rise in expenditure in 1976 (see Table 7.3) was caused by the move to the new premises and the expenditure required. There was only a modest surplus \$5 577 out of an income of over \$2 million. Nevertheless the club continued to support soccer to the extent of \$109 231. The annual report of 1976 stated that 'despite the problems experienced in our first year in our new premises ... [and] in spite of the drain caused by our heavy borrowings, the club is now trading profitably and the directors are looking to the future with confidence'. The report also stated that in establishing the new Hakoah Club 'our aim ... of a home away from home has been realised. We have promoted

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<sup>44</sup> *Hakoah Fiftieth Anniversary*, Hakoah Club, Sydney, 1989, p. 3.

<sup>45</sup> *Australian Jewish News*, 20 April 1972.

<sup>46</sup> *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs SFC Annual Report 1974*, October 1973.

<sup>47</sup> Andrew Sardy, Interview, 1998. Andrew Sardy was a Hungarian Jew born in Budapest. He arrived in Australia in 1951 and joined the Hakoah club that year. He served on Hakoah committees from the early 1950s.

<sup>48</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 89.

<sup>49</sup> *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs SFC Annual Report 1977*, October 1977.

many forms of entertainment this past year with emphasis on live shows and imported artists in the Jewish style.<sup>50</sup>

The dwindling funds provided by gate money for the Hakoah football team led to the idea of a social club. However, from the outset one of the stated aims of the social club was to provide a social and cultural home for the Jewish community in the widest sense. This aim harked back to the old Hakoah notion of the multi-sport club servicing the community. Hakoah was now moving into territory occupied by other community organisations. Jewish sport was once again well organised by New South Wales Maccabi and a number of other organisations looked after cultural activities. The Maccabean Hall remained a community centre, so it is no surprise that many in the community viewed Hakoah's objectives with some suspicion.

Lowy admitted in 1972 that Hakoah 'had been outside the fold of organised Jewish sport for some time'.<sup>51</sup> Lowy and his board believed that Hakoah had to re-engage the Jewish sporting community and this meant developing a formal arrangement with Maccabi. Lowy wished to explore ways in which Hakoah could patronise Jewish sport without appearing to become too dominant. When the new premises opened in 1976 there were practical and financial reasons for Lowy to achieve a rapprochement with other Jewish sports organisations. Hakoah's new complex contained facilities such as a gymnasium, a swimming pool and meeting rooms. Hakoah offered physical fitness classes for adults and children, karate, fencing, swimming instruction, chess, backgammon among other activities.<sup>52</sup> The Jewish sports community and Jewish youth were the primary markets for Hakoah's facilities. Attracting Jewish patrons was an important part of the club's business plan.

Lowy became a patron of Maccabi and a Charter of Agreement was signed between Maccabi and Hakoah in November 1972. It was agreed that Hakoah would continue to promote professional soccer but would provide annual grants for community sport. The *Jewish News* characterised the charter as 'a marriage' in which:

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<sup>50</sup> *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs SFC Annual Report 1976*, October 1976.

<sup>51</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 82.

<sup>52</sup> *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs SFC Annual Report 1976*, October 1976.

both groups retain their identity and control over their respective professional and amateur interests, while combining such activities and amenities from which they can benefit in conjunction.<sup>53</sup>

The *Australian Jewish News* stated that 'Sydney Jewish youth has found itself a new rich uncle'.<sup>54</sup> Lowy stated that:

The recent Charter of co-operation between Hakoah and N.S.W. [sic] Maccabi was an important move in the development of both organisations and is an encouraging sign of recognition by the community of Hakoah's emergence as a sports centre for the whole community in addition to the club's fundamental purpose as a soccer club. Maccabi's executive is to be congratulated for its approach as the co-operation allows for the development of the club in the area of participating sports as distinct from spectator sports and brings in a strong youth section which is essential in the future development of the club.<sup>55</sup>

By the time the club in Hall Street opened, Hakoah was in a position that the Maccabean Hall could not match, because of its poker-machine derived wealth. Hakoah could provide spacious modern facilities and an assured income. The relationship between Hakoah and Maccabi was not an easy one and Maccabi representatives failed to attend the 1975 Hakoah AGM. However, Hakoah continued to value the relationship. The 1977 annual report stated that 'the close working relationship between Hakoah and Maccabi continues and it is very pleasing to note a large number of Maccabi members who have become members of Hakoah'.<sup>56</sup>

By the mid-1970s Hakoah was in the enviable position of having a new licensed club with up-to-date facilities. Hakoah had established the social club as a separate entity and harboured ambitions beyond funding a professional football team. Running the social club brought new prudential responsibilities that Frank Lowy and his fellow directors took very seriously. Continuing to fund a professional football team with declining gates was bad business. Lowy's next task was to turn the football team into a self-sufficient unit. He also believed that

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<sup>53</sup> *Jewish News*, 10 November 1972.

<sup>54</sup> *Australian Jewish News*, 17 November 1972.

<sup>55</sup> *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs SFC Annual Report 1972*, October 1972.

<sup>56</sup> *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs SFC Annual Report 1975*, October 1975

Sydney soccer had begun to stagnate and that the answer for Hakoah and other clubs was to establish a national league.

### **Hakoah and community**

From the mid-1950s Hakoah had removed itself from community organisations to concentrate on organising a soccer team.<sup>57</sup> Hakoah's dispute with Kadimah in the 1950s, and the controversy over playing soccer on the Sabbath all served to distance Hakoah from official involvement. Despite its difficulties with other official Jewish bodies, Hakoah officials viewed the club as a symbol of the Jewish community and expected its support.

The first event that moved Hakoah towards a closer relationship with the Jewish community was the Six Day War of June 1967. After President Nasser of Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping, ordered United Nations troops out of the Sinai Peninsula and replaced them with Egyptian troops, 'Israel seemed to be in mortal peril and her predicament aroused widespread public sympathy in the west'. On 5 June 1967 the Israeli air force mounted precision raids on the air forces of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq and its land forces advanced into the Gaza Strip, Sinai, the Golan Heights and the West Bank of the Jordan River. Israel won a decisive victory.<sup>58</sup>

The Six Day War had a profound affect on Australian Jewry. Rutland stated that over 6 000 people crowded into the Central Synagogue in Sydney to pray for Israel. The community closed ranks publicly, either 'by attending rallies or donating to the emergency appeal ... all factional differences were set aside and the outpouring of feeling ... completely eradicated previous antipathies and tensions'.<sup>59</sup>

Hakoah's response to the war was to hold an emergency meeting at the Central Synagogue on 6 June when 200 of its members donated \$18 000 to Israel. By the end of the appeal a total of \$45 000 had been raised by the club. When a day of prayer was called by the New South Wales Rabbinate, the NSWJSF agreed to postpone Hakoah's match against APIA. Fisher and Morrison believed this was

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<sup>57</sup> The club had resigned from the Jewish Board of Deputies because, according to Klimt, 'we wanted not to interfere in any political problems like orthodoxy and the modern Jews and the very liberal Jews'. H Klimt, Interview, 1994.

<sup>58</sup> N De Lange, *The Illustrated History of the Jewish People*, p. 365.

<sup>59</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, p. 359.



a 'turning point for Hakoah, there could now be no doubting its Jewishness'.<sup>60</sup> Sam Fiszman believed that this was one of Hakoah's greatest achievements in that it demonstrated to all Hakoah's solidarity with Israel.<sup>61</sup>

This support for the Jewish homeland re-connected Hakoah with the Zionist fervour of Hans Klimt and those who had met to revive the club at the Tarbuth rooms in 1944. The old Hakoahners, such as Klimt, had maintained contact with the B'nai Brith Hakoah 1909 and regularly remitted funds to Israel. The Six Day War resulted in a greater Hakoah involvement in the welfare of the Jewish people. Others in the community, such as sporting and youth groups, began to look to Hakoah for guidance and financial support.

### **The 1970s and the National Soccer League**

Hakoah began the 1970s by winning the State League premiership by one point from St George. This ushered in a period when the club dominated the New South Wales first division, winning four out of five titles, from 1970 and 1974. Hakoah also secured the pre-season Ampol Cup in 1973 and won the state-wide knock out, the Rothman's Cup in 1974. During this run of success it lost only 16 of 110 games. In 1971 the club was undefeated.<sup>62</sup> Success in the championship in this period was not followed by grand final success, the club appearing in only two grand finals, losing 2-1 to Marconi in 1973 and 4-2 to St George in 1975 (a match made famous because of John Warren's heroic display for St George in his last match before his retirement).

Hakoah's success was built on the foundations laid by the 1968 team which included players such as Ray Baartz, Alan Marnoch, Jim McKay, Robert Fekete, Dennis Yaager and Danny Walsh, who were at their peak. The club also imported Glasgow Celtic goalkeeper Frank Haffey and Wolverhampton Wanderers player David McLaren as manager. Hakoah took steps to employ its players on a more professional basis. This was achieved by asking those members who ran businesses to employ players on a part-time basis, allowing them afternoons free for training and other club duties.

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<sup>60</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 59.

<sup>61</sup> Sam Fiszman, Interview, 1994.

<sup>62</sup> *New South Wales Soccer Federation Annual Reports, 1970-1974*.

In 1974 Hakoah imported two outstanding Brazilian players, Agenor Muniz and Hilton Silva. Hakoah also signed Australian international midfielder and striker John Watkiss from St George and other high quality players such as Tom Morrow (Newcastle United, England) and Henry Mowbray (Blackpool, Bolton Wanderers and St Mirren). Hakoah also reaped the benefits of nurturing juniors, promoting future internationals Murray Barnes, Steve O'Connor and Kevin Mullen who made an impact. With its new social club providing the cash for professional players Hakoah set the benchmark in Australian soccer in terms of its management.

Despite the quality of the Hakoah soccer team, it was not supported by the Jewish community at the gate. Occasional one-off promotions sometimes attracted large crowds but the club could not sustain such efforts. Annual reports during this era voiced the frustration of Lowy and his board at a lack of support for Hakoah from the community. Lowy was convinced that the problem was not peculiar to Hakoah, rather, soccer more generally was stagnating and was losing its spectator appeal. He noted a steady decline in support at the gate, no matter how entertaining or successful Hakoah was or how much was spent on marketing. He also took account of the decline of other once powerful migrant-based clubs such as Sydney Austral and Prague. The decline of the powerhouse Prague club was especially spectacular. This club was eventually absorbed by Yugal – a Serbian club with a Pan-Yugoslav philosophy — in 1973. Lowy was convinced that the answer to soccer's and Hakoah's problems lay in the formation of a national league that would be based on the leading clubs and the most outstanding players in the country playing in the best available stadiums.

The first proposal for a national soccer league had been made at the AGM of the ASF in 1965.<sup>63</sup> The idea was taken up in the *Soccer World Annual* which contended that a 'national league carefully administered, may inject some new blood into a stagnating game by 1967 or 1968'.<sup>64</sup> However, in the mid-1960s the ASF was not in a position to establish a national league because it was in debt, paying off the fine to FIFA. It was not until 1967 that the ASF earned a surplus. Its financial situation improved with the introduction of the soccer pools in 1975.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> *Soccer Yearbook*, Murray Publishers, Sydney, 1977, p. 8.

<sup>64</sup> *Soccer World Annual* 1965.

<sup>65</sup> J O'Hara, *A Mug's Game: A History of Gaming and Betting in Australia*, UNSW Press, 1988, p. 200.

Establishing a national soccer league became one of Lowy's passions after he became president of Hakoah in 1969. He believed that it was opportune to launch such a league in 1974, because of anticipated publicity from Australia's World Cup qualification. He stated that:

Sooner or later the existing gap between what we take at the gate to what we spend on soccer must be narrowed considerably. We have let it be known to those who are responsible for soccer in N.S.W. [sic] and Australia that it is not possible to carry on with the present set-up, and should a national league not become a fact, we might withdraw from the competition and field an amateur team.<sup>66</sup>

Lowy's comment regarding lack of public support of the team became a common refrain over the next twelve years. However, he persisted with championing the concept of a national league. No other sport in Australia had established a national league, which was a complex and costly organisational undertaking. There was, firstly, the task of selecting the strongest clubs, both in terms of players and finances. Next was the challenge to select suitable grounds. There was also the challenge of meeting the huge costs of moving teams around Australia, identifying sponsors and ensuring television coverage. Eventually the Dutch multi-national corporation Philips became the league's sponsor and Channel Ten agreed to provide coverage. Revenue from these sources covered transport and associated costs while administration fees were covered by a \$3 500 affiliation fee paid by each club. Lowy was delighted when the ASF approved the league for the 1977 season.

Delight soon turned to acrimony and then outright war between Hakoah and Arthur George, president of the ASF. George insisted that only teams named according to their geographical location would be admitted to the league. In other words identifiably 'ethnic teams' were unwanted unless they changed their name. Lowy and his board refused to do so. Other clubs dealt with this rule in a variety of ways. Marconi retained its name on the basis that it was named after a famous inventor of global importance and therefore 'Marconi' was not an ethnic name. Pan Hellenic became Sydney Olympic ostensibly because Olympic Airlines became its sponsor. No one was fooled by this. The word 'Olympic' has well known close associations with the Greek community. However, South Melbourne dropped 'Hellas' and Adelaide Juventus became Adelaide City.

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<sup>66</sup> *Annual Report Hakoah Eastern Suburbs Soccer Club 1974.*

When a league program was printed listing Hakoah as Eastern Suburbs, Lowy was furious. He believed that the national league would deliver better football, and draw larger crowds. However, this change in his club's name would alienate its already small spectator base and the majority of its members. Lowy and Bill Kadison met with the ASF. After an acrimonious meeting the name Eastern Suburbs Hakoah was accepted.<sup>67</sup>

Lowy's alleged anger over the ASF deleting the name Hakoah from its first NSL printed league program is difficult to understand. A memo from ASF president Arthur George to executive committee members on 1 December 1975 recorded that the committee had resolved to operate a national league. Included in the plethora of detail was a list of six prospective New South Wales member clubs of the league. One was Bondi Rovers 'sponsored by Hakoah/Eastern Suburbs'.<sup>68</sup> The minutes of the ASF executive committee meeting of 6 December 1975 noted the acceptance of applications to join the national league from several clubs including Bondi Rovers. In an attached schedule which rated the clubs, Bondi Rovers was described as of 'unquestionable financial strength'. It was described as a 'leading club, contributing numerous players to the national team'.<sup>69</sup> Possibly the clubs were not paying too much attention to the ASF's proposed names during the early planning phase of the national league.<sup>70</sup> Possibly Lowy did not take these draft proposals seriously. By the time of a meeting of the NSL sub-committee on 23 July 1976, held at the Hakoah Club in Sydney, the Sydney clubs with the exception of Pan Hellenic (Sydney Olympic) were listed under their traditional names.<sup>71</sup> The evidence suggests Lowy was prepared to enter the league as Bondi Rovers. When club members railed against the potential loss of the Hakoah name, Lowy felt bound to represent their views and to battle with the ASF for its retention. Lowy bided his time on the name issue. Within a couple of years he would oversee a name change.

The debate over the name of the club was part of a wider debate over ethnic names. Mosely has documented the tension between the Anglo-Australian and

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<sup>67</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 107.

<sup>68</sup> ASF Memo, Arthur George to Executive Committee Members, 1 December, 1975, ASF Archives.

<sup>69</sup> Minutes of ASF Executive Committee Meeting, St Kilda Travellodge Hotel, Melbourne, 6 December, 1975, ASF Archives.

<sup>70</sup> St George were described as 'Sydney Saints' and Western Suburbs as the 'Sydney Magpies'.

<sup>71</sup> Agenda of ASF National League Sub-Committee, Hakoah Eastern Suburbs Soccer Club, 23 July 1976, ASF Archives.

ethnic soccer communities dating back to the late 1950s. He noted various attempts to ban ethnic names beginning in Canberra in 1960. Naming teams along district or regional lines conformed to the norms of Australian sport. It would also appease the league's backers who believed that there should be a serious attempt to 'Australianise' the game.<sup>72</sup> However, this process ignored the histories of the various clubs. Rather than promoting some of the district clubs that retained some support and had extensive junior networks, the strategy forced clubs supported by ethnic communities to deny some of their history. Such a strategy was problematical. Sydney's successful APIA club, backed by the Leichhardt Italian community, and with some residual support from the old Leichhardt soccer community, refused to join the league. The well supported Croatian clubs in Melbourne and Sydney also refused to change their names and stayed out of the league in its formative years. When South Melbourne dropped 'Hellas' its chairman Sam Papasavas claimed that 'any name change would only be for a few newspaper reporters ... everyone else will still call us Hellas and our supporters will not know us by any other name. Why take the risk of alienating them? They take pride in our name!'<sup>73</sup>

The name Hakoah had a deep historical resonance for Sydney's Jewish community, but suggesting it was an ethnic name was problematical because here was a long debate over whether Jews were a religious or an ethnic group. The ASF's stance on Hakoah left it open to charges of anti-Semitism. Hakoah was openly a Jewish club, but whether it was an ethnic club could be questioned by the Hakoah board. While Sydney Hakoah had been founded by Viennese Jews, it had been run and supported by Jews from many backgrounds over the years including Anglo-Australian Jews. In the 1970s the club's power base was mainly Hungarian and it was led by Lowy (from Czechoslovakia), and its (by now small) supporter base was drawn from a number of countries. It is likely that the ASF's view that Hakoah represented a Jewish ethnicity fairly reflected the views of the general public. Hakoah was regarded as a Jewish club by the mainly European clubs it competed against and their supporters. Since the Six Day War, Hakoah had steadily identified itself with the cause of Israel and actively sought to establish itself as a focal point of community activity.

In October 1976, the Federal Community Affairs Commissioner Al Grassby joined the debate, stating that he was opposed to clubs being forced to change

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<sup>72</sup> P Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer*, p. 75.

<sup>73</sup> *Australian Jewish Times*, 14 October 1976.

their names. Likewise, Bill Jeggerow of the New South Wales Ethnic Communities Council considered the ASF's attitude towards Hakoah and other ethnic clubs to be high handed. He stated that 'we live in a multicultural society where various cultures should have the opportunity to maintain direct public links and strong links with the past'. However, Hakoah had used the name 'Eastern Suburbs' for some time. Annual reports from 1970 referred to the name Hakoah Eastern Suburbs. This name had been promoted in an attempt to attract more support from the local non-Jewish community.<sup>74</sup>

Lederer was one on Lowy's board who was persuaded earlier than most that Hakoah should consider a name change. He stated that the club was:

ethnic in nature but that it is not a closed door. Hakoah and other ethnic clubs fulfilled a valuable function for those who arrived in Australia, without the language, looking for company with whom one can communicate and to help him through the transition period until he finds his feet. The ethnic sports club is a natural place for this function ... and I think we fulfilled this function, the people could start from Hakoah, look for a job and then stand on his own two feet. But my view was always to open the door to get everybody in, anybody in the area with an interest in soccer, to take part as a player, or on the board, in membership, in any position. But it was a hard job at times, because a lot of old timers thought conservatively and stuck to old traditions in religion and all that and I wanted to overcome all this, I wanted to have a club for the eastern suburbs. This was my great ambition.<sup>75</sup>

Klimt, on the other hand, did not regard Hakoah as an ethnic club. He believed that 'we tried to assimilate as much as possible to the Australian condition in every way'.<sup>76</sup> Andrew Sardy acknowledged the club's Jewishness but regarded Hakoah as a multicultural club. While soccer was very important to the Jewish community and the team was seen to represent the community 'we have a number of different ethnic groups as members, all different and we didn't ask where they are from'.<sup>77</sup> Despite the variety of views in the club on the issue of ethnicity, it was clear the ASF and member clubs regarded Hakoah as ethnically

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<sup>74</sup> For example see *Wentworth Courier* 19 February 1975, 'Hakoah Eastern Suburbs team has strengthened its ranks by signing three players from overseas'.

<sup>75</sup> Andrew Lederer, Interview, 1994.

<sup>76</sup> Hans Klimt, Interview, 1994.

<sup>77</sup> Andrew Sardy, Interview, 1998.

Jewish. The move to 'de-ethnicise' Australian soccer by the ASF and its Anglo-Australian advisers and marketers continued until the 1990s. Some believed that the rationale for this policy was misplaced. Peter Kell believed the impression that soccer was ghettoeised led to:

de-ethnicisation strategies in order to enhance its image. This has not been successful because to do so fails to address the complex social functions these clubs perform. The anglicisation of soccer has perpetuated a series of beliefs not only about soccer but about the ability of ethnic communities to co-exist. The irony is that soccer is one of the most ethnically diverse sports in Australia and one which there is an absence of on-field violence and vilification. The media focus has tended to highlight occasional-off-field incidents ... in many ways soccer is a victim of some anxieties about migration and multiculturalism, anxieties which have triggered moral panic that has unjustifiably identified soccer as the 'folk devil' of Australian sport.<sup>78</sup>

### **Hakoah in the NSL**

Hakoah achieved mediocre results in 1975, failing to make the top four. In the 1975 annual report Lowy contended that this was because of untimely injuries and some retirements. However, he reported that the club had not invested in new players in 1975 due to the uncertainty over the NSL proposal, but foreshadowed that:

1976 should be a good soccer season for the club as the team has been considerably strengthened by recent acquisitions from both within Australia and overseas in preparation for the anticipated commencement of the national league.<sup>79</sup>

When plans for the NSL were confirmed in 1976, Hakoah began once more to invest in players, recruiting Alex Robertson and Terry Smith from the United Kingdom to bolster an already strong squad. The club also re-signed its former Israeli player Gerry Chaldi as coach. He transformed the team into one of the most entertaining in the state league and Hakoah finished third on the table losing only four games. Chaldi stated the team was young and 'had class' and

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<sup>78</sup> P Kell. *Good Sports: Australian Sport and the Myth of the Fair Go*, Pluto Press, Annandale, 2000, pp. 170-171.

<sup>79</sup> *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs SFC, Annual Report 1975*.

with a few additions could be a force in the forthcoming national league. He also acknowledged Hakoah's place in the Jewish community and the importance of the social club, a new development since the early 1960s. He stated that:

Quite apart from soccer, one of the greatest things to have happened to the Jewish community in Sydney was the establishment of our wonderful social club. In the old days when I wanted to meet other Jews who had Hakoah at heart I had to frequent coffee lounges. Now the clubhouse is my second home.<sup>80</sup>

Chaldi's team approached the NSL in 1977 with confidence after the recruitment of Eddie Thomson. Unlike many imported players, who were no more than competent professionals, Thomson was a first class player who had represented Aberdeen and Hearts in Scotland and played in the United States before coming to Australia. He captained one of Hearts' most successful teams and may have been a full Scottish international if he had not come from a generation of outstanding Scottish centre halves. Thompson played a key role in the last years of Hakoah and later became Australia's national coach.

In the inaugural NSL season Hakoah and Marconi finished equal on top of the table. Hakoah became the first national football champions of Australia in any code, on the basis of superior goal difference. Hakoah's seventeen-man squad consisted of six Australian, six Scottish, three English, one Irish and one Brazilian-born players. Only coach Chaldi was Jewish.

The formation of a strong NSL and Hakoah's success in it did not result in increased crowd support. Hakoah was the ninth-best supported of fourteen teams. The aggregate crowd for thirteen home matches was only 26 150, for an average of 2, 026. The largest crowd was 6 115 against Marconi and the lowest was a mere 400 against the Melbourne suburban team, Mooroolbark, the weakest NSL team. This poor crowd also demonstrated the weakness of Hakoah's support at the time because it was involved in a tight race for the championship. Hakoah relied on matches against fellow well supported Sydney clubs to boost its home gates. While there was much praise for the team, in his annual report the hard headed businessman Lowy reflected on this ambiguity:

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<sup>80</sup> *Hakoah Star*, vol. 1, no. 12, December 1977.



There is a debate going on among ourselves as to what is the future for a club such as ours with so little support at the turnstiles. We, the board members, are facing the constant dilemma as to how much effort, financial, moral, and physical, should be given to the sport in view of the little support that the soccer club receives from its members and the community in general, especially in view of the position it is holding in the competition. The big question is, who are we doing it for? If our members are not interested then what is the purpose of making the sacrifice to maintain such a fine soccer team. I have stated before that participation and involvement is an absolute necessity for our soccer club to survive.<sup>81</sup>

The 1978 season was a controversial one for Hakoah. There was considerable debate in the club over whether to continue with the team. There was also a belief that elements in the ASF and the NSL's management wanted Hakoah removed from the competition because of its inability to attract sizeable crowds.<sup>82</sup> Hakoah formed an 'action committee' to garner greater financial support and to try to woo the missing fans. Lederer's company Presto became a sponsor donating \$20 000 per season,<sup>83</sup> and David Jones (the large department store chain) sponsored the club's three junior teams. The club moved its home from Wentworth Park to the E S Marks Field in the eastern suburbs, closer to its core support.

West Adelaide won the 1978 championship but the NSL introduced a top four play off series and Hakoah won this, defeating Marconi 4-2 in the final. However, there remained no improvement in the club's support. In a desperate bid to improve this situation, Lowy and his board proposed a radical name change to an extraordinary general meeting on the 19 June 1978. The meeting voted by a two-thirds majority to change the club's name to Sydney City, deleting the Hakoah name. The outcome of the meeting generated much animosity from many towards Lowy and the board. Lowy defended the name change in *Hakoah Star* in August 1978:

I feel with those who wanted to retain the old name because of what it represents; but there comes a time when change is necessary and we feel now is the time. The objective is to gain the support of Sydney.

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<sup>81</sup> *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs SFC Annual Report 1977*.

<sup>82</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 108.

<sup>83</sup> Andrew Lederer, Interview, 1994.

Generally our team plays attractive attacking soccer and as a rule is among the leaders, so I see no reason why, with good promotional backing which will have to be undertaken, we cannot attract additional to our own supporters the non-ethnic and non-affiliated soccer supporters in Sydney.<sup>84</sup>

In a report in *Hakoah Star* Lederer stated that :

When we decided to play under Sydney City it was not intended that we would lose our devotion and loyalty to Hakoah in any way, it was done as a formality because it was felt it would open the gate for progress. The board considered that with Sydney City as a name we would be able to attract additional supporters with ethnic origins as well as 'fair dinkum Aussies' who are interested in soccer. Regardless of the new name of the club or its origin, we are all Australians and want to play as big a part as possible in assimilating all nationalities.<sup>85</sup>

The Jewish Lord Mayor of Sydney, Leo Port, and Jewish member of state parliament Sid Einfeld, were recruited as club patrons. The Hakoah Club would continue to underwrite the Sydney City team. It would also undertake a promotional campaign to attract more supporters. Former Australian national team captain John Warren was appointed public relations manager. Eddie Thomson became player manager.

While the club continued to wear the blue and white of Hakoah, Sydney City's jerseys no longer sported the 'Magan David' with the letter 'H' at its centre. Instead, the City of Sydney symbol of an anchor, adapted from the City of Sydney's coat of arms, became the club crest. Hakoah also acquired the nickname 'City Slickers', the brainchild of a none-too-clever marketer. This tag may have had unfortunate connotations for a Jewish club. A 'slicker', could be regarded as one who is clever and smooth but insincere. It was probably not an appropriate name for any sporting club, especially a Jewish one. Following on the advice of a marketing company, the ASF allocated each NSL club a new logo in 1980 with the view to 'modernising' or 'Australianising' its image. The nicknames were predictable. Some were allocated bird names such as Hawks

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<sup>84</sup> F Lowy, *Hakoah Star*, August 1978.

<sup>85</sup> A Lederer, *Hakoah Star*, January-February 1979.

and Eagles. Others were named after animal names such as Wolves, Rams and Lions. Yet others were referred to as Gladiators, Gunners and Strikers. Sydney City's new logo was very different. It depicted a cartoon figure of a 'City Slicker' complete with monocle, bowler hat and a cane tucked under his arm. The figure toed a soccer ball adorned with a stylised Kangaroo, the logo of the ASF. These symbolic changes distanced Sydney City from the old Hakoah. To Viennese Hakoahns and those familiar with Hakoah's heritage, such symbols may have appeared undignified.

Sydney City was officially launched on 18 March 1979. The team was successful in reaching the top four play off after Marconi had won the league, defeating Brisbane City 2-1 in a two legged play off (1-0 and 1-1). Hakoah invested heavily in players, bringing in Newcastle K B United's outstanding striker Ken Boden and Australian youth international Jim Patikas.

The club also developed an outstanding junior squad, many of whom would become future star players. The 1980 season was probably the closest Lowy, Lederer and his board came to realising their dream. Sydney City played outstanding football, winning the NSL. The board reported a significant increase in crowds, stating that over 100 000 (101 404) people had attended its matches for the first time. This statement was misleading. The figure included away matches and therefore included the home gates of other clubs. The true aggregate figure for home matches was 33 258, with an average home gate of 2 558. However, there were some positives. Lowy became chairman of the NSL and was awarded the Order of Australia Medal. Murray Barnes was made captain of Australia, and Sydney City had several other players in the national squad. Lederer stated in his 1980 report that: 'I see the future of Sydney City bright, and providing we can continue to work together as a team we will achieve our target'.<sup>86</sup>

While the future looked promising for Sydney City in 1980, all was not well with the NSL. There was much tension between individuals representing the clubs on the NSL committee and with the ASF. Many club officials were businessmen who used their position in ethnic soccer clubs to advance their own interests and increase their status in their respective communities, making it essential for them to maintain their team in the NSL. Because of this, club and sectional interests often came before the good of the league and the sport. There

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<sup>86</sup> A Lederer, *Hakoah Star*, vol. 4, no. 12, December 1980.

were also more clubs clamouring for admittance to the NSL as the state leagues struggled after the loss of the big clubs. The NSW SF and other state federations were also discontented, feeling they had been emasculated by this process. There was an ongoing debate over ethnic names. Several clubs also reported financial difficulties. Lowy believed that the league should be self-governing and should break away from the control of the ASF. Lowy's main difference with the ASF was that the NSL clubs were spending \$4 to \$5 million developing young players but the ASF and the State bodies (which still had a say) were taking the leading players away for international and home representative games far too often. He believed that only important national team commitments should be allowed to interfere with the regular competition.

Sydney City continued to be the outstanding team in the NSL. Between 1980 and 1987 the team won five championships, one grand final and one national cup. In 1982 Sydney City was so dominant it won the league by nine points. That season the team was strengthened by the purchase of Australian internationals John Kosmina and David Mitchell. Kosmina set a scoring record of 23 goals for the season. However, increased gate support did not eventuate.

Despite his optimistic assessments in 1980, Lowy announced in November 1982 that the Hakoah Club would cease its involvement in soccer. He stated that there 'was no support for the game from the majority of members and there would be a new emphasis on providing a Jewish club rather than a club for Jews'.<sup>87</sup>

Table 7.4. Hakoah/Sydney City Gates 1980-1986

Year	Aggregate home crowd	Highest	Lowest	Average
1980	33 258			2 558
1981	40 683	6 892	1200	2 712
1982	33 700	5 658	1018	2 246
1983	30 169	6 712	400	2 011
1984	14 267	2 101	543	1 019
1985	25 442	8 420	635	2 312
1986	unavailable			
*1987	5 187	5 187	5 187	

Source: Figures compiled from *Hakoah Eastern Suburbs Soccer Football Club Annual Reports* and M Hill, NSL statistical records 1977-1992.

\*Only one match played.

<sup>87</sup> *Hakoah SFC Annual Report, 1982.*

However, a group of soccer supporters within the club challenged the decision persuading the board to change its mind. As a result the Hakoah Club donated a capped sum of \$200 000 per annum to the Sydney City Soccer Club for two to three years. The situation would then be reviewed.<sup>88</sup> In a speech to the AGM in March 1983, Lowy announced that the soccer committee wished to return to the old financial arrangements but that the board viewed this as undesirable. He stated that 'it must be acknowledged that this club would not be here but for the enthusiasm for soccer. But we cannot live in the past, we must look to the future. If support for the game is not there, why continue?'<sup>89</sup>

Despite a successful season it was reported in September 1983 that Sydney City still lacked community support. Before a crucial match against Preston, to be played at City's ground to determine the championship *Australian Soccer Weekly* lamented over Sydney City's lack of support: 'alas, Sydney City do not have sell-outs. One of the great tragedies of the Australian soccer scene is the way fans shun the Slickers. If the fans roll up in hundreds and not thousands they do not deserve top quality soccer.'<sup>90</sup>

Developments in the NSL did not assist Sydney City's cause. After the euphoria of the early seasons, the League had many problems. The NSL's manager, John Franks, criticised the parochialism of some soccer administrators in 1980. He stated that:

... often decisions are made (or not made) by the governing body about the fate of the league which are not in the best interests of the whole, but in the interests of a particular section ... (the league needs) a greater degree of

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<sup>88</sup> F Lowy, *Hakoah SFC Annual Report*, 1982.

<sup>89</sup> F Lowy, 'Text of Speech' to AGM March 1983, *Hakoah Star*, June 1983.

<sup>90</sup> *Australian Soccer Weekly*, 20 September 1983.

acceptance and friendly assistance by member federations of the governing body.<sup>91</sup>

This was a muted attack on the factional fighting between the various state federations, the NSL and the ASF. In June 1983, it was reported in the soccer press that the state bodies of South Australia and Victoria were 'combining to wipe out the league'. The report stated:

SA [sic] and Victoria are believed to be in favour of 'Superleagues' [sic] in their own states culminating in the top four going into an eight team national league play off. Once again soccer is about to self-destruct. Once again we will be split into state factions. NSW [sic] has made it clear it wants its own 'Superleague' [sic]. This means a breakaway, as when the old federation was formed by a group breaking away from the old association. June 30 is set down for the delegates to meet ... it could go down as the date that heralded the start of another chaotic Australian soccer revolution.<sup>92</sup>

The state federations prevailed and the existing NSL format was abandoned. In an effort to cut costs in 1984 it was decided to re-structure the league into two conferences, the Australian Conference and the National Conference. It was argued that more local derbies would lead to bigger crowds. Sydney City's conference included former NSWFSF state league clubs Blacktown City, Melita Eagles, Sydney Croatia and Penrith City (a club with no history of large public support).<sup>93</sup> The result was disastrous for the NSL and Sydney City. Crowds reached a new low and Sydney City, a superior team playing in an unattractive league, saw its gates drop to an average of just over 1 000 per match for a season aggregate of 14 267 fans at home matches. The traditional highest drawing fixture against Sydney Olympic drew only 1 155 spectators. Six matches attracted less than 1 000 people.<sup>94</sup>

The 1986 season was Sydney City's last. The team finished fifth, its worst result in the national competition but it won the Nanda Cup (national knock out cup). Throughout 1986, Lowy questioned whether the Hakoah Club could

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<sup>91</sup> J Frank, 'Lets get Soccer's Act Together', *Goal*, April 1980.

<sup>92</sup> *Australian Soccer Weekly*, 28 June 1983.

<sup>93</sup> *National Soccer Annual*, Newspress, Sydney, 1983.

<sup>94</sup> Official Match Reports, NSL.

continue to support Sydney City, sparking a heated debate within the Club, the community, and the Jewish press. In a last desperate bid to attract support from the Jewish community Hakoah signed, on a short term loan, Israeli national team star Eli Ohana from Betar Jerusalem. Members of the supporters' club contributed \$7 000 the balance being donated by the directors of the Hakoah Board.<sup>95</sup> Ohana played five matches for Sydney City and coach Eddie Thomson stated 'he is the best player I have ever had in the team'. While Ohana showed 'outstanding skill, and regular Sydney City players expressed admiration for his abilities', his presence had little impact on the team's performance or on gate receipts.<sup>96</sup> Former Hakoah player George Shipp noted that Ohana's presence could be represented as a case of 'the "Salon Jude", the Jew you invited because you didn't have any Jews'.<sup>97</sup>

In arguing for the retention of the Hakoah's soccer team, Bill Kadison cited Frank Lowy's words of 1968 when he had advocated the establishment of a social club: 'Instead of asking individuals to put their hand in their pockets month after month, let's have poker machines finance the maintenance of our soccer team'.<sup>98</sup> Individuals such as Kadison favoured the Hakoah Club bankrolling Sydney City and noted that the club's Articles of Association left no doubt as to the position of soccer in the club. The Articles stipulated that members 'must have participated in soccer in a playing or official capacity, supported the team at matches, or been involved in giving substantial support to soccer'. In Kadison's view soccer was the *raison d'être* for the social club's existence, and therefore it should go on supporting the club financially.<sup>99</sup> To counter this argument, Lowy and his Board of Directors promoted a successful motion at a March 1985 Extraordinary General Meeting that the existing Articles of Association that linked membership of the club to soccer be changed. Instead, a new Memorandum of Association stated that 'Ordinary members who shall be persons who have attained the age of eighteen (18) years and who at the date of the election to membership shall satisfy the board as to their eligibility for membership'.<sup>100</sup> In the notice of the meeting in October 1984 Lowy stated

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<sup>95</sup> *Hakoah Star*, vol. 10, no. 8, September 1986.

<sup>96</sup> *Hakoah Star*, vol. 10, no. 8, September 1986.

<sup>97</sup> George Shipp, Interview, 1997.

<sup>98</sup> B Kadison, *Australian Jewish Times*, 24 July 1986.

<sup>99</sup> R Fisher and P Morrison, *Hakoah Club Sydney*, p. 121.

<sup>100</sup> *Hakoah Club Limited Extraordinary General Meeting*, 25 March 1985.

that the 'changes are designed only to remove anomalies and bring the constitution into line with the aspirations of the club as they exist today'.<sup>101</sup>

### Anti-Semitism and Sydney Hakoah

According to Suzanne Rutland sympathy for the cause of Palestinians began to manifest itself in Australia in the 1960s. By the 1980s there was substantial anti-Israel feeling in Australia leading to overt incidents of anti-Semitism. Of concern to the Jewish community was the running of anti-Semitic stories in some publications of the Arab and mainstream press. In 1985 the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) successfully sued the *National Times* for publishing cartoons which were considered grotesquely anti-Semitic.<sup>102</sup>

Anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiment had a direct and violent impact on Hakoah on 23 December 1982 when the Club building was bombed. The Israeli Consul General's office, located in Frank Lowy's Westfield Corporation building, was bombed earlier that day.<sup>103</sup> The fact that the Hakoah Club was a target demonstrated that it was widely recognised as an important Jewish institution in the city. Luckily, the bomb exploded in the basement car park and there were no injuries. Members on the premises were evacuated efficiently. The bombing brought the realisation that Jewish institutions in Australia were regarded as legitimate targets by enemies of Israel. The president of the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies, Leslie Caplan, stated that 'Australia has been sheltered from these events in the past. But terrorism breeds terrorism. There may be more acts of this kind in the future.'<sup>104</sup> As a result of the bombing security at the club was tightened further.

If there was some observable anti-Semitism in Australian society, it is difficult to evaluate any such manifestations at Hakoah or Sydney City soccer games. John Kosmina, who played for Sydney City from 1982 to 1986, reported comments such as 'Bloody Jews', 'Bloody Jew lover' and the like or 'Jews buy the premiership', being screamed by some spectators. He stated 'I was often called a Jew. Some rival fans threw cans and bottles or spat at us to back up their anti-Jewish chants'.<sup>105</sup> Other evidence suggests opposition supporters resorted to

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<sup>101</sup> *Hakoah Club Limited, Fifteenth Annual Report*, 31 October 1984.

<sup>102</sup> S D Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora*, p. 383.

<sup>103</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 September 1982.

<sup>104</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 September 1982.

<sup>105</sup> John Kosmina, Interview, 1995.



anti-Semitic comments in their barracking. It was reported in May 1986 that 'ugly crowd violence and attacks on Sydney City players have marred previous matches ... during recent seasons many Jewish soccer fans, fearing crowd unrest have stopped attending matches. This was partly responsible for the loss of support for Sydney City.'<sup>106</sup> John Hughson has described anti-Semitism as part of the makeup of the BBB, the right wing supporters club of Sydney United (formerly Sydney Croatia).<sup>107</sup> Hakoah officials have been less willing to comment on the issue of anti-Semitism or acknowledge its occurrence at the club's matches. Lederer stated that in fifteen years of club involvement he remembered 'only a very few incidents', but we never took any notice of it. I didn't take it seriously'.<sup>108</sup> Lederer stated that there 'may have been some 'Nazi elements' on the terraces because 'many people from the Hitler regime or the fascist regimes of Europe ran out to Australia and wanted to carry on in the same style, but we never took any notice of it'.<sup>109</sup>

### **The Pratten Park riot**

On 7 July 1985, Sydney City played Sydney Olympic at Pratten Park in Ashfield. Police expected a crowd of around 3 000 people but over 6 000 turned up because this game was considered a grudge match. The well-supported Greek club had not been successful in winning trophies and there was some resentment towards Sydney City, which was viewed by many as a club that bought premierships. John Kosmina stated that 'it was known for some weeks in soccer circles that there would be trouble at that game'.<sup>110</sup> There may have been an anti-Semitic edge to criticism of Sydney City by Olympic fans, but this has been impossible to establish or to separate from other factors. It is possible that there were class issues involved, a resentment of Sydney City's perceived wealth — the working class western suburbs versus the rich eastern suburbs. During the game Gerry Gomez of Sydney City and Marshall Soper of Sydney Olympic became involved in an incident after which both players were cautioned and received yellow cards. Later in the game, Soper retaliated violently after a rugged Gomez tackle and was sent off. A section of the Sydney Olympic support jumped the fence and attacked the Sydney City players. John Kosmina

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<sup>106</sup> *Australian Jewish Times*, 15 May 1986.

<sup>107</sup> J Hughson, 'A Feel for the Game'.

<sup>108</sup> Andrew Lederer, Interview, 1994.

<sup>109</sup> Andrew Lederer, Interview, 1994.

<sup>110</sup> John Kosmina, Interview, 1995.

stated that 'at least one Sydney Olympic player was seen standing at the fence waving crazed fans onto the pitch'.<sup>111</sup> Goalkeeper Tony Pezzano was violently assaulted by the mob but managed to escape. The following day the press described the events drawing on 'wogball' stereotypes. Reports were headed by banner headlines such as 'Soccer Scum'. A report stated that:

this is Australia, and soccer fans must be reminded of this ... the NSW [sic] government should give the NSL administrators a couple of acres, four miles past the black stump and let the ethnic supporters beat the tripe out of each other — as long as it is away from decent sportsfans.<sup>112</sup>

For many of the Hakoah old guard, who had revived the club after World War II, worked for it during the 1950s and 1960s, and now attended as quiet observers, this incident was reason enough that Sydney City and Hakoah should withdraw from soccer. Klimt stated that many of the older Hakoahans, the spiritual fathers of the club, met that evening and decided that to continue the team would be to invite further incidents. Klimt claimed that anti-Semitism at games had been growing, and to continue was to provide the anti-Semites a site to nurture their racism. He stated that 'after the Olympic match at Pratten Park we decided it would end. In any case, this sort of thing had been keeping the older supporters away from the game. It was sad but it was time to end it'.<sup>113</sup>

It is unknown how much influence Klimt and his colleagues had on the decision to withdraw Sydney City from the NSL, but by the end of 1986 Lowy's mind was made up. He chose to wait to the 1987 AGM to put forward this proposal, even though the season began before the scheduled date of that meeting. Before the AGM Lowy circulated a letter that stated:

I say without qualification that we cannot afford to maintain a professional team any longer. Despite the sentimental arguments, I can see no justification for our current level of funding. The cost of running the team this season could be \$300 000 and \$500 000 would be needed to maintain a top-line professional team in the near future. The decision of your board of directors to bite the bullet on this issue is a sad one. But we must be realistic. Our support for Sydney City will have to end sooner or later.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> John Kosmina, Interview, 1995.

<sup>112</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, 8 July 1985.

<sup>113</sup> Hans Klimt, Interview, 1994.

<sup>114</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 April 1987.

Sydney City took the field for the last time against Sydney Olympic at the E S Marks Field on 29 March 1987. Several of the club's stars such as John Kosmina had already been sold. Sydney City won 2-0 before 5 187 spectators, both goals being scored by Tommy McCulloch. It was reported that 'the Slickers produced the poise and polish expected of them ... they will be a major force despite losing many outstanding players at the start of the season'.<sup>115</sup>

At the AGM on the following day, Lowy put forward his case for disbanding Sydney City. His arguments were familiar to club members and the community. He stated that 'we could see no further justification for continuing with NSL soccer and we will be asking the members for a mandate to make the correct decision'.<sup>116</sup> The meeting voted by a two-thirds majority to withdraw from the NSL, thereby vindicating Lowy.

The decision precipitated loud protests in the community from the Jewish and the mainstream press. Many felt Sydney City should not have played only one match and that they had treated the NSL with disrespect. Once the decision had been reached by Hakoah to disband Sydney City, efforts began to rescue the soccer club from oblivion. NSW State League club Blacktown City was mooted as a possible buyer of the team. The executive director of the NSL Stefan Kamasz expressed his concern to the NSL:

it would be totally unfair to our sponsors, to the league, the other clubs and the players. They made a commitment at the start of the season and Frank Lowy is too honorable a man to go back on his word ... there is little the league (can) do if Hakoah withdraw.<sup>117</sup>

Soccer Journalist Ray Gatt, wrote in the *Sydney Morning Herald* that:

Lowy, who waged a major campaign against the continuation of professional soccer at the club, was unavailable for comment ... in pursuing his business ambitions Lowy — who has tried several times in

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<sup>115</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 March 1987.

<sup>116</sup> *Jewish Times*, 26 March 1987.

<sup>117</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 April 1987.

recent years to disband the Slickers — has become alienated from the game.<sup>118</sup>

Speaking on behalf of the Hakoah players captain Steve O'Connor stated:

The club should get its act together and let us know what is happening. The players deserve to know one way or another. The innuendos and vague statements have not helped at all, even though the morale of the players remains high. The club would have been better off folding before the start of the season. At least then the players would have known where they stood and could have found new clubs.<sup>119</sup>

While nothing materialised from Blacktown City's interest, a consortium led by television producer Harry Michaels made a bid of \$650 000 to purchase the Sydney City team. Michaels stated that 'I want to be a 51 per cent shareholder in the club and I am determined to make every effort to get it'.<sup>120</sup> The NSL, however, was adamant that outsiders would not determine who would play in the league even if they were buying out an existing club. Lowy and Andrew Kemeny met with the chairman of the NSL, Sam Papasavas, on 3 April. After the meeting it was announced that Sydney City would withdraw from the league, which would continue with 13 teams. Kemeny stated he could not understand why the league 'did not play ball with Michaels'. Papasavas explained that:

There were too many grey areas. They wanted to play City's games in other cities, which was just not acceptable to us. In any event we will not allow a club to be taken over without the league's consent. The timing is absolutely shocking. If they had taken the decision last year when we were reducing the number of teams in the league then no-one would have complained ... the league bargained extremely hard with Hakoah in an effort to make the club change its mind.<sup>121</sup>

Lowy claimed that the team could have continued for the season, but that the strong advice of the coach was that the players could not continue knowing they would be disbanded in a few months. Some members of the Hakoah

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<sup>118</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 April 1987.

<sup>119</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 April 1987.

<sup>120</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 April, 1987.

<sup>121</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 April 1987.

supporter's club believed that Lowy, while he may have had genuine concerns over the financing of a team that was not being supported at the gate, had another agenda. Its chairman, Ralph Hurst, believed Lowy's motives were political and personal, and accused him of 'stacking the vote by signing up new members from Jewish nursing homes and bussing them in for the meeting'.<sup>122</sup> Lederer stated that:

Lowy got sick of the narrow conservatism of soccer administration. Frank is a go-ahead person who shows no mercy. His vision for the game is better than anyone I know, but he got to the point where he realised he couldn't get through and didn't want to frustrate himself any longer.<sup>123</sup>

There is no evidence to support the claim that Lowy disbanded the team for selfish motives. It is more likely that Lowy acted on the basis of what he felt was for the good of the Hakoah Club, which he saw as taking on a different role in the Jewish community. Lowy and his board had been trying for years to garner support from both the Jewish community and the general community for Hakoah and Sydney City. The Hakoah Club had financed the finest and most professional club in Australian soccer history, but it failed to gain a consistently large following from its core support group or from the general eastern suburbs community. Members had been warned repeatedly that the Board would disband the team unless this support improved. Anti-Semitism may have been a contributing factor. The bombing of the club in 1982 shocked the club and the community, forcing it to confront the reality that Australia's relative isolation was no longer a guarantee of safety from terrorism. It is also clear that Lowy was frustrated because ASF and NSL administrators would not accept his vision for the game. In his biography Lowy stated that:

I just had to admit that the social club could no longer support the team in the way it used to. I didn't want to be president of a second rate team and I didn't think members would either. The decision was brewing for a long time ... [it] was met with great resentment ... from being a hero I was suddenly the enemy. There was even a life-threatening letter. Board support was not unanimous and Andrew Lederer fiercely fought the decision.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Ralph Hurst, Interview, 2000.

<sup>123</sup> J Margo, *Frank Lowy Pushing the Limits*, p. 251.

<sup>124</sup> J Margo, *Frank Lowy Pushing the Limits*, pp. 249-251.

In retrospect Hakoah's withdrawal from professional soccer seemed inevitable. The club, like many others, had served a group of post-World War II immigrants. It became a focal point for a developing community identity in the 1960s. The opening of the social club marked a new departure for Sydney Hakoah. Its facilities became a centre for a new multicultural Jewish community, rather than the team which had been a symbolic manifestation of a newly emerging and confident community. The name change to Sydney City was a last desperate attempt to salvage the dream of maintaining a well supported professional soccer team that could continue to represent the Jewish community. It was also a last ditch attempt to establish the soccer team as a sound business in its own right. Kadison called Sydney City 'a pseudo-Hakoah'. In 1979, writing about Hakoah's name change, *Soccer World* accurately summed up Hakoah's dilemma and predicted a bleak future:

Without jumping to rash and premature statements it appears that Sydney City's metamorphosis from Hakoah has failed to produce results and is unlikely to do so next year or the year after. Hakoah or Sydney's Jewish community proved to be a wafer-thin foundation for a big club, so a wider base had been sought. However, Hakoah probably overshot the target by trying to represent the entire city of Sydney, with its three million people and varied lifestyles while control of Hakoah remained in the hands of the same Hakoah officials. Sydney City will have to find an answer because with their present following they face increasingly insurmountable problems in the future and could find it pointless to spend \$250 000 or more per year to keep up with the Joneses. Many of the players openly admit that they hate playing 'at home' in front of empty terraces; the lack of support fast eroding the morale of the team.<sup>125</sup>

### **Conclusions: The Hakoah Legacy**

Frank Lowy did not seek re-election as president of Hakoah at the end of 1988. Margo stated that he:

left the club after nineteen years and felt he had achieved all he could. The club was financially healthy with little debt. Walking away, he had some

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<sup>125</sup> *Soccer World*, 25 October 1979.

misgivings but also the satisfaction of knowing that he left the organisation clean and in good health.<sup>126</sup>

The man who took over as president was Berni Jacoby who had introduced Frank Lowy to the club in the 1950s. Jacoby had retired as a Hakoah player in the late 1950s because he did not support the direction the club was taking, with fewer Jewish players. Jacoby and his board articulated the club's new direction at the 1988 AGM stating that the aim was:

to encourage, foster and promote all forms of social, cultural, religious, educational and scientific activities and to provide financial support and other club facilities to social, cultural, sporting, educational, religious or charitable organisations and associations.<sup>127</sup>

Hakoah Soccer Club left a number of important legacies, the most important being the social club in Hall Street Bondi. It is a physical manifestation of the success of post-World War II Sydney Jewry, and it owes its existence directly to the Hakoah Soccer Club. The Club became the central meeting place for numerous Jewish organisations and the money it generated provided assistance to many community organisations. The soccer club also left a legacy of success. For over 50 years Hakoah was a symbol of Sydney Jewry which pre-1945 Australia Jews could not have contemplated. The soccer club was also the training ground for many of the most successful and influential Jewish immigrants such as Frank Lowy, Andrew Lederer, Sam Fiszman, Andrew Sardy, Howard Lowe and others. It provided the site where their managerial and bargaining skills were honed and the networks where businesses were built. The Club also brought these people to prominence in the Jewish community and in the Australian community more generally. Frank Lowy's achievements have been noted. Andrew Lederer managed Australian international soccer teams. Sydney Hakoah Soccer Club demonstrated the dynamism of the post-World War II Jewish community. It can also be seen as a symbol of multicultural Australia. Hakoah moved beyond the Jewish community, it employed players from various national backgrounds in its quest for success. It brought innovation to Australian soccer in the same way immigrants brought new life and variety to Australian society.

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<sup>126</sup> J Margo, *Frank Lowy Pushing the Limits*, p. 250.

<sup>127</sup> *Hakoah Annual Report 1988*.

There was also a legacy for Jewish sport. Although Hakoah had at various times been in conflict with the Jewish sporting authorities, other Jewish clubs, and the religious establishment, it had gradually drawn the Jewish sporting community closer after the opening of the social club. Community sport in Jewish Sydney was enriched by Hakoah, its new wealthy benefactor.

Hakoah was successful because its founders pursued a dream of excellence. In the 1950s its management was conscious of the legacy of Hakoah Vienna and they sought to emulate that. The team became a rallying point for many Jewish immigrants and their financial support at the gate, through donations, membership fees and various fund-raising activities saw Hakoah grow stronger. Together with other immigrant-based clubs, Hakoah sought to change soccer in New South Wales, and was at the forefront of the 1957 soccer revolution. Hakoah took advantage of its soccer success to further build the club. When it became clear in the late 1960s that soccer was in decline, officials of Hakoah were again in the vanguard demanding change, for the sake of soccer and for the sake of the club's survival.

Funding the club became increasingly problematic in the 1970s as nurturing the team became more expensive. From 1969 Lowy and his board pursued the idea of a social club and a national league. Both were achieved, and Hakoah became Australia's best performed and most professional team. However, the community had grown older and more assimilated into Australian life. The Hakoah football team's public support diminished with the community's growing affluence, and in the end the hard business decision was made to withdraw the club from professional soccer. Nevertheless, the Hakoah Club had become an essential element in the Sydney community. Its links to the ideals of Hakoah Vienna, its Zionist founders and the state of Israel are confirmed by a clause in the Hakoah constitution that states 'if one day Hakoah ceases to exist, any surplus assets go to the state of Israel'.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> 'Debate of Hakoah's identity: A Jewish club or a club for Jews', Jewish Free University, *Hakoah Star*, vol. 16 no. 5, October-November 1992.



## Chapter Eight

### Conclusions

This thesis has explored the role of the Hakoah Soccer Club in the Sydney Jewish community and its impact in Sydney soccer over a period of almost 50 years. The role of Jewish sport and its place in the community before and after Sydney Hakoah's founding in 1939 has been considered and the degree to which sport in Sydney's Jewish community was affected by the Zionist notion of muscular Judaism has been explored. Questions have also been raised about the use of a sporting club by Jewish immigrants as a vehicle of assimilation or acculturation. Finally, the thesis has examined the legacy of Hakoah. How did a minor soccer club, established by a group of Viennese immigrants, evolve to become a focal point of the Sydney Jewish community and the rich benefactor of social, cultural, scientific, philanthropic as well as sporting activity for that community?

It is clear that the original Hakoah Vienna Sports Club was a child of Zionism. This has been documented by a number of historians, notably John Bunzl. It is also important that the men who founded the Hakoah Club in Sydney in 1939, and then revived it in 1944, were committed Zionists. They were imbued, as the private papers of Klimt demonstrate, with the ethos of Hakoah Vienna, probably the leading proponent of muscular Judaism in Europe in the inter-war period.

The founding of Sydney Hakoah by those with a direct connection to a European club, with a tradition of the aggressive definition of muscular Judaism, was unique on the Australian Jewish sporting scene. Before World War II Zionism was relatively weak in Australia and the community's place on the Australian social landscape was one of non-distinctive conformity, dominated by Anglo-Australian notions of loyalty to the nation and the British Empire. While Jews were at times the victims of anti-Semitism, it was mild in relation to discrimination suffered elsewhere. As such, Australian Zionism usually took the form of a general concern for the conditions of Jews in Europe and financial support for settlements in Palestine/Eretz Israel. Political Zionism that looked towards establishing a state of Israel in Palestine was anathema to many Australian Jews. When extreme Zionist guerrillas such as Irgun began to attack British forces in Palestine in the 1930s this confirmed to many Australian Jews that support for political Zionism could compromise the

link to Britain. The notion of creating the muscular Jew overtly challenging stereotypes of the Jew as weak of body and providing fit physical specimens for anticipated struggle for the Jewish homeland, was not entertained by Sydney Jewry.

Despite this, there was a sudden upsurge of organised sport in the Sydney Jewish community after the Maccabean Hall was opened in 1923. While some of the rhetoric used to promote sport in the community may have drawn indirectly from muscular Judaism, nowhere in the existing literature is there a direct reference to this idea prior to World War II.

What one does find is an emphasis on the social utility of sport which was encouraged because it promoted good health. The physiques of the sportsmen and women were praised as examples of the healthy parents of tomorrow. This was the primary reason for the rise of sport among Sydney Jewry in the 1920s. However, it may have been a reflection that Jews became involved, like every other community, in the Australian passion for sport. The non-distinctive profile of the community and the irreligiosity of many of its young people resulted in a high rate of inter-marriage. Community elders believed that sport could be a valuable tool to help to bring young people together socially. However, Jews were part of an Australian milieu and it was not out of the ordinary for young Jews to participate in sport in Sydney. Issy Sender and Alec Owen for instance played rugby league for Sydney University, Roy Levy and Alec Marks appeared in grade and representative cricket and Myer Rosenblum did likewise in rugby union. Jews such as E S Marks and the Brodsky twins were prominent in sports administration. Sport was part of the Australian way of life. However, for Jews practising sport as a community objective was new. Jewish sport from the early 1920s in Sydney was characterised more by British notions of athleticism and the sports first promoted by the Maccabean Hall were athletics, cricket, swimming and tennis — very British, very Australian. This was followed by a brief flirtation with another uniquely British and Australian game, rugby league, followed by soccer. Popular indoor sports were billiards, snooker and table tennis.

We can only assume that Sydney Jewry knew of the use of sport by Jews in other countries. We can draw this assumption from the naming of the various Jewish sports clubs and organisations. The Jewish War Memorial building was named the Maccabean Hall and one of the first clubs formed in Sydney was the MSAC. The

peak body established to govern Jewish sport was eventually named the MSU. The Maccabean Soccer Club was established in Perth in 1934. The use of words such as Maccabi and Maccabean demonstrated an awareness of the Jewish sports movement. Manual Gelman of the JLV attended a meeting of the World Maccabi Union in London in 1931. Melbourne Hakoah Soccer Club was established in 1927, adopting the name of the famous Viennese club although it did not subscribe to its ethos nor did it have any connection with it.

There is no doubt that the uptake of organised community sport by Sydney Jewry was a major change in the way Jews conducted themselves. The anti-Semitic images that appeared in the Australian print media typically portrayed the grossly distorted figure of weak physique. While Sydney Jewry adopted Anglo-Australian models of sport, the mere fact of participation in sport directly challenged anti-Semitic notions whether this was the intent or not. George Eisen has best described the taking up of sport by Jews around the world:

By the turn of the century, Jews were well on their way to achieving an economic success unrivalled in history. Over several decades they became the virtual middle class and the integral component of the intellectual elite in some countries. Corresponding with a dynamic process of assimilation and the parallel emergence of political Zionism, Jewish society consciously transformed its value system from purely religious to an ethno-cultural 'nationhood' Judaism ... the emergence of modern sport movements and the Jewish community came together at a fortuitous moment in history..<sup>1</sup>

When Hakoah was established in Sydney in 1939, there was already a well organised structure of Jewish sport. Most sport was played in community leagues and competitions and centred on the Maccabean Hall. The social side of sport was very important to clubs so there were numerous dances, smoke concerts, picnics and dinners. The interstate sporting carnivals had been established and were a highlight on the Jewish calendar.

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<sup>1</sup> G Eisen, 'Jewish History and Sport', *Journal of Sport History*, vol. 25, no. 3, Fall 1998, p. 519-520.

The arrival of sports-minded European Jews in the late 1930s saw the Maccabean Hall challenged to cope with their numbers and their expectations. Sydney Hakoah was established in 1939, although not immediately under that name. At first it played within the existing structure but it soon adopted the name Hakoah and moved outside of it. Following the model of Hakoah Vienna, Sydney Hakoah joined a non-Jewish league. This was a unique development for Sydney Jewry.

After Sydney Hakoah closed down from mid-1942 until 1944, Klimt and other former members and supporters of Hakoah Vienna revived the club. They did so in an unmistakably Zionist fashion, holding the first meeting at the Zionist Tarbuth Club, on the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hakoah Vienna's founding. The ideas of Max Nordau and the ethos of Hakoah Vienna were clearly spelt out.

For a short period into the 1950s Hakoah remained a minor club playing in local leagues. It remained true to Zionist principles and often remitted money for the cause of Israel. The post-World War II flood of immigrants to Australia included thousands of Jews from many European countries and many were attracted to Hakoah. While some supported the club at the gate many others, notably Hungarians, became involved in running the club. During the 1950s Sydney Hakoah became a symbol of an emerging multicultural Sydney Jewry that adopted cultural or ethnic Judaism as its community identity. Hakoah had political battles with the Jewish establishment that reflected tensions between the new arrivals and the establishment.

### **The 1957 soccer split: ethnic coup or revolution?**

Hakoah, together with other emerging migrant-based soccer clubs, became disillusioned with the governance of soccer in New South Wales in the 1950s. Eventually tensions rose to the point where a breakaway from the controlling body occurred and Hakoah was one of the split's leaders. The soccer split had some positive benefits. It brought professionalism into the open. The sport became more democratically run with the players receiving greater benefits. It resulted in better administration of the game and innovations such as night games and increased sponsorship. There were more players and more spectators. Migrant players and coaches brought new ideas on how the game should be played and how players should train. The split can be viewed as a forward looking revolution rather than a

case of European immigrants staging a backward looking coup, yearning for the way things had been done 'back home'.

On the negative side, the split brought about Australia's disastrous expulsion from FIFA. It also alienated some of the older administrators and some long standing Anglo-Australian supporters of the game. When rapprochement was reached with the rival NSWSA the NSWSF made the mistake of excluding the well-run and popular Leichhardt-Annandale club. This act alienated many Australian supporters of the game and helped to reinforce the notion gaining currency that the game was being taken over by 'wogs'. This was confirmed for many by the relegation of Granville, Australia's oldest club, in 1960. This event highlighted the problem of an automatic promotion and relegation system in a small market such as Sydney. Another negative impact was the locating of the premier competition in the Sydney metropolitan area with one south coast club included. The loss of the northern coalfields clubs was a body blow not felt for years by the NSWSF because migrants significantly boosted crowds at Sydney soccer grounds in the late 1950s and early 1960s. 'Wogball' was born as an idea, even if it took some time to become a reality.

However, the 1957 soccer split in New South Wales was not a sudden coup by the 'ethnic' clubs. This process was complex and slow. The non-district clubs that participated in the breakaway from the NSWFA, Hakoah, Sydney Austral and Prague can be more aptly described as 'migrant-based' clubs. Each club was multi-national in support, administration and playing staff. Of the NSWSF foundation clubs, only APIA neatly fitted the description of an 'ethnic' club using Isajiw's definition of ethnicity. In 1957, the first year of the NSWSF the leading four clubs were district clubs Canterbury, Auburn, Bankstown and Gladesville. Canterbury, which was often brilliant and Corrimal (later as South Coast United) remained strong clubs well into the 1960s. The ethnic clubs such as APIA, St George, Pan Hellenic and Croatia did not take the game over until the 1960s, with APIA the dominant team of that decade. Prague kept pace and even dominated for a time before declining, while Hakoah, the most multicultural of the clubs went from strength to strength.

### **The Hakoah social club and the NSL**

Hakoah administrators such as Walter Sternberg and Bill Kadison became dynamic leaders of the breakaway NSW SF. When soccer boomed in Sydney between 1958 and 1963 Hakoah was one of its leading clubs. However, by the mid-1960s it became obvious that despite continuing on-field success Hakoah's core support was slipping.

In order to finance the soccer team, the Hakoah social club was established. Crucially, it was established as a separate entity and its aims included promoting itself as a cultural centre for Sydney Jewry. The social club, first at Roscoe Street and later at Hall Street Bondi, brought Hakoah undreamed wealth. It also changed the way the Jewish public viewed Hakoah. Since the Six-Day War in 1967, Hakoah officials had worked hard to identify the club with the community. Its efforts in raising funds for Israel confirmed its Jewishness and countered the belief that it was no longer a Jewish club because it had few or even no Jewish players on its team. In the 1970s Hakoah also sought to re-align itself with amateur Jewish sport and it entered into formal agreements with the Maccabi Union.

When Lowy and the Hakoah Board of Directors realised that even a strong Hakoah team, built on the back of poker machine money, could not draw consistently good crowds, they believed the fault lay not only in an apathetic community but with the state of soccer in Australia. They believed that the existing state leagues contained too many weak clubs, that talent was too thinly spread, and that the major clubs in each state needed to be brought together in a national competition. The Hakoah committee, through its wealthy social club, poured millions of dollars into supporting its team which dominated the NSL from 1977 to 1986 winning a host of championships. However, community support was still not forthcoming.

During this period, the Hakoah social club became the most important centre for the Sydney Jewish community outside the synagogues and many Jewish organisations looked to Hakoah for support. The Hakoah name became a symbol of Jewish identity. Hakoah's members insisted that Lowy fight for its retention when the ASF wanted the club to adopt a new name as a condition of entry to the NSL in 1977. However, in 1979 Lowy believed a change of name to Sydney City was necessary in

order to appeal to a wider public, for the survival of this professional soccer team as a viable unit. The change of name was greeted with derision by many in the Jewish community as was the inappropriate nickname of 'City Slickers' and an inappropriate logo foisted on the club by the ASF. Finally Lowy and his board, believing that it was irresponsible to continue funding a professional team nobody wanted to watch, successfully carried a vote of club members to withdraw the club from professional soccer.

### **Identity and community**

It is clear that throughout its history Sydney Hakoah and later Sydney City Soccer Club was actively supported by only a small section of the Jewish community. It is likely, but impossible to prove, that this support came predominantly from immigrants and not the long established Anglo-Australian Jews. Enthusiastic administrators who often used their personal resources to finance the team kept the club alive. By the late 1950s the club was committed to competing in the highest league possible. To do so meant that it needed to sign non-Jewish players, for the Sydney community was numerically too small to produce a large talent base of soccer players capable of playing at the professional level.

Many Jews objected to the non-Jewish makeup of the team. Bernie Jacoby resigned from the club in the late 1950s over this issue. It also caused former players such as George Shipp to lose interest in the club. The club's stance on playing soccer on the Sabbath, and later allowing alcohol to be sold in its social club and the introduction of poker machines brought it into conflict with the religious authorities.

The era dating from 1960 to the disbanding of the team in 1987 is characterised by three main themes, the excellence of Hakoah's teams, the fight to gain greater support from the community and the establishment of the social club. Hakoah's success in identifying itself with the Jewish community heavily militated against its chances of drawing significant numbers of new non-Jewish fans. By the 1980s many of the traditional supporters had grown old and less enthusiastic about following the team at the ground week in week out. The younger generation were well-educated and with a diversity of social and sporting activities available, did not have the same need to support a soccer team.

The Six-Day War rallied the Sydney Jewish community behind the state of Israel. Hakoah played an important role in organising this support. As a result of this the community increasingly looked to Hakoah's leadership. Hakoah was also led by successful Jewish 'new Australians' such as Frank Lowy. Their high public profile and club leadership enhanced their standing in the community. Through the social club and its facilities as well as its pro-Israel activities Hakoah became a social and cultural centre of the community. The bombing of the Hakoah Club on the same day as the Israeli Consulate in 1982 confirmed that Hakoah was widely recognised as a symbol of Jewish identity. Professional soccer had now served its purpose and became of secondary importance.

### **Some suggestions for further research**

This thesis has brought to light some issues worthy of future research. Brian Kino's study of the Jewish interstate sporting carnivals ended in 1972. Since then, the Maccabi organisation has grown in importance in the Australian Jewish community. A study of its function over the last three decades is overdue. Australian Jewry embraced the World Maccabi Games. The place of Australia in world Jewry can be examined through its participation at these Games especially in light of the tragic events that occurred at the opening ceremony of the 1997 Games in Israel. Another suggested area of study is the use of sport by individuals to enhance their status in the community. Jill Margo has already emphasised the importance of sport in the career of Frank Lowy.

Pre-1945 Jewish sport in Australia also beckons as a rich field of study. While this thesis provided an overview of sport in the Jewish community in Sydney from the 1920s, there is more work to be done on this in New South Wales and the other states. Likewise post-World War II amateur Jewish sport is deserving of a study.

Another important issue that emerges from this work is the place of women in Jewish sport in Australia. While the Jewish sports movement in Australia engaged women from the beginning they were largely absent from Sydney Hakoah. A study of Australian Jewish women, gender and sport is overdue.



Discussion of anti-Semitism has been part of the Sydney Hakoah story. There have been many studies of Australian anti-Semitism but few have addressed the issue of anti-Semitism in sport. A major study of anti-Semitism in Australian sport would make a valuable contribution to our understanding of this phenomenon in Australian society.

Mosely's groundbreaking work has laid the foundations for the history of soccer in New South Wales but there remains a rich unexplored field of research. The era of the 1957 New South Wales soccer split, for example, is deserving of more study. There are many club histories waiting to be written. Many soccer clubs such as Granville and Leichhardt-Annandale made a large contribution to both Australian sport and to their local communities, some for over a century. Likewise the northern coalfields and Illawarra clubs were vitally important to local community identity. This is a rich area to explore for those interested in the history of identity, the history of community and even labour history. Many of these clubs were, or remain, the longest continuous community organisation in their area. They are the hidden constituency of Australian sport. A history of the short and spectacular career of the Sydney Prague Soccer Club would also help us better understand the dynamics of the migrant-based soccer clubs of Sydney after World War II.

In the national sporting context, tours of Australia by international teams have provided vital insights into Australia's progress as a nation. A study of tours of Australia by international soccer teams since 1905, by a much more diverse range of nations and/or territories than say cricket or rugby, would enhance our understanding of the nation. There is also much research to be done of soccer at the community level. How and why has the game become the game of choice for more youngsters in Australia than other football codes? To understand this a history of the development of junior and community soccer around Australia is waiting to be written.

## Appendix 1

Max Nordau 'Muskeljudentum' *Jüdische Turnzeitung*, first year, no. 2, August 1900.

## Muscular Judaism

Two years ago, in a committee discussion at the Basel Congress, I said: "We must strive to create muscular Judaism again!"

Again! Because history shows us that such a thing has existed before.

For a long time, too long, we have practised the destruction of the body.

But I'm expressing myself inaccurately. It was others who practised this destruction on us, with tremendous success, as the hundreds of thousands of Jewish corpses in the ghettos, in church squares, on the roads of mediaeval Europe attest. We should have denied ourselves this virtue more than willingly. We should have looked after our bodies, rather than destroying them, or - metaphorically and literally - allowing them to be destroyed. We know how to make good use of our life and to judge it according to its worth. Perhaps it [the body/health] is a less treasured asset for us than it is for many others, but it is still a valuable possession and we are happy to take good care of it. For centuries we were not able to do so. All the elements of Aristotelian physics were stingily allocated to us: light and air, water and soil. In the narrowness of the Jewish street our poor limbs forgot how to move themselves freely; in the gloom of their sunless houses our eyes became accustomed to nothing more than a shy blink; in the constant fear of persecution, the strength of our voice lapsed into a scared whisper, which only swelled into a powerful cry when our martyrs on the funeral pyre screamed the prayer for the dead into the faces of their executioners. But now the constraints are broken, we are permitted the space, at least physically, to live freely. If we keep clinging to our oldest traditions, we will again become strong-chested, taut-limbed, far-sighted men.

This aim, to reach back to a proud past, finds strong expression in the name, which the Jewish *Turn* club in Berlin has chosen. "Bar Kochba" was a hero, who refused to accept any defeat. When victory eluded him, he knew it was time to die. Bar Kochba is the last embodiment in world history of a battle-hardened Jewry, quick to arms. To respond to Bar Kochba's appeal betrays a certain ambition. But ambition sits well with *Turner*, who strive for the highest possible development.

*Turnen* has a more important role to play in education and upbringing for Jews than for any other people. It makes us stand straight, both physically and morally. It nourishes our self-consciousness. Our enemies maintain that we already have far too much of that. But we know best, how false this misrepresentation is. We lack completely a calm belief in our own strength.

Our new muscular Jews have not yet achieved the heroics of our ancestors, who poured into the arena in their masses, to test themselves against the trained hellenic athletes and the powerful northern barbarians. But morally they already stand higher than them, since the old Jewish circus-fighters were ashamed of their Jewishness and tried by means of a surgical trick to hide the sign of the covenant [i.e. circumcision], as we know from the sermons of the outraged rabbis, whereas the members of the Bar Kochba club proclaim their origins loudly and freely.

May the Jewish *Turn* club flourish and prosper and develop into a model to be eagerly imitated in all the centres of Jewish life!

Dr. Max Nordau (Paris).

## Appendix 2

Editorial, *The Maccabean Annual* 1933. This editorial illustrates the world view of the majority of Australian Jewry in the 1930s.

## *Editorial*

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CONSIDER the Jewish War Memorial. It stands, in a friendly community, as a tribute to those of our own faith who gave their lives in battle; it remains an earnest of our loyalty and our trust to those Australians who are of other creeds.

AUSTRALIAN Jewry asks only this of Australia: "We are one with you; we join in your joys and in your sorrows. Over all of us the Empire's banner flies, and as the Call was answered once, so shall it be again when the time comes."

IN aiding the Memorial you are doing nothing but your duty. So that future generations of Jews may become better Jews and better Australians, the Memorial stands, its component parts organised for the cultural progress of our brethren, but steadfastly against any movement which will segregate us from our non-Jewish fellow-countrymen.

BRITAIN—and Australia, which is Britain—gives us by her friendship and her tolerance a torch to watch and to follow. Because German rabble subject our people to the indignities and horrors of the Middle Ages; because Rumania and Poland forget the duties of nations, Britain is shown in prouder relief as a country wherein a man's faith is respected as his own, and where there is civil peace and community friendship.

FOR Britain, the men to whom our Memorial is erected died. For Britain, our new generation must strengthen the living presence of the Memorial, so that the glory of British citizenship will be etched indelibly on the heart of every Jew

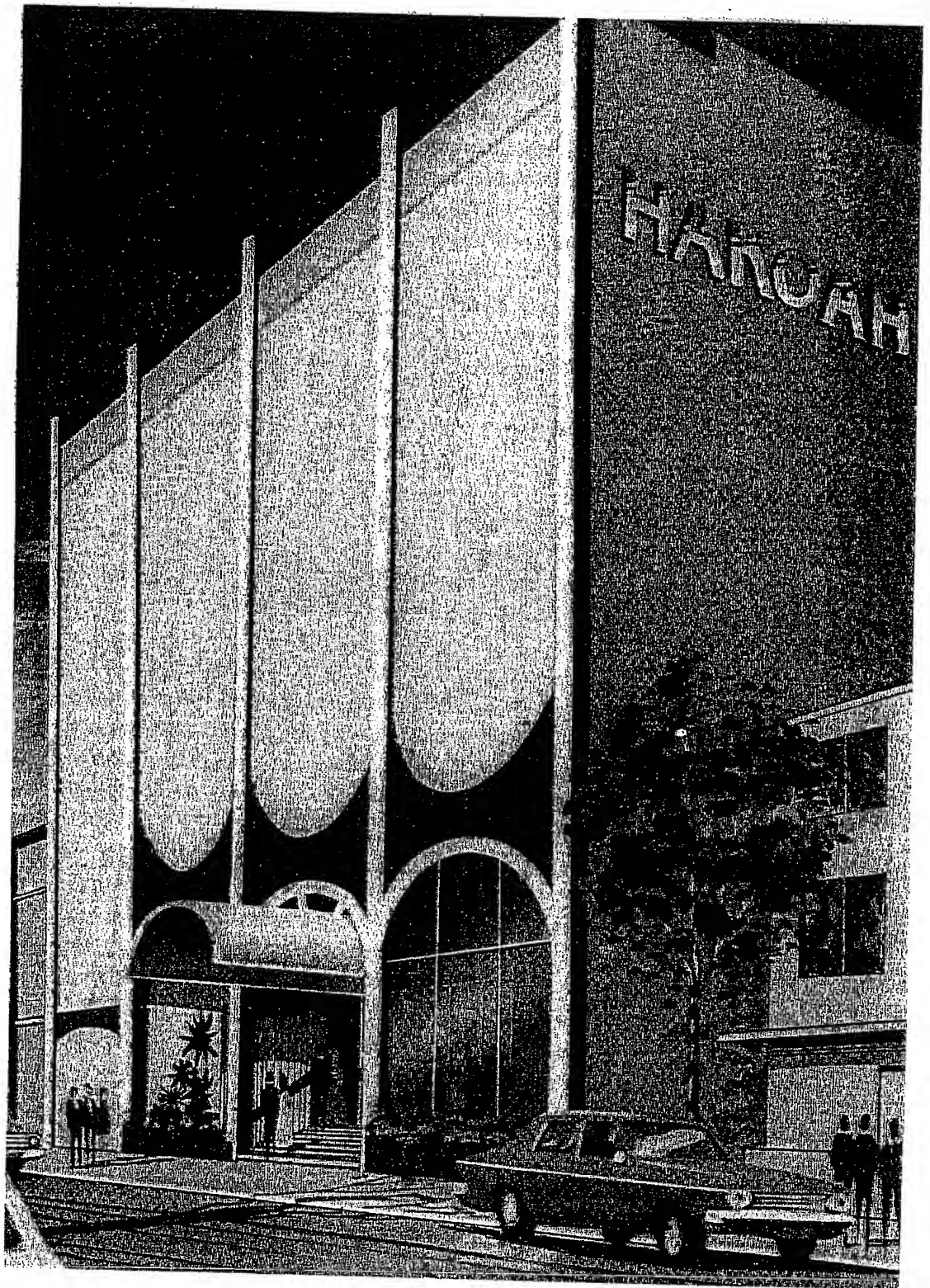
## Appendix 3

Sydney City logo 1980. This logo was devoid of any Jewish symbols.



## Appendix 4

Artist's impression of the new Sydney Hakoah Social Club October 1975.



This is the way architect Henry Kurzer saw the completed new clubhouse at 61-67 Hall Street, Bondi, due to open in October 1975, with a gala opening celebration the following month.



## Appendix 5

Australian national team captain John Kosmina playing for Sydney City  
before an empty E S Marks Field in 1983.



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